

Kings' Sagas and Norwegian History

VISIT...

LANZAROTE
Caliente.COM

The Northern World

North Europe and the Baltic c. 400–1700 A.D.
Peoples, Economies and Cultures

Editors

Barbara Crawford (St. Andrews)

David Kirby (London)

Jón Viðar Sigurðsson (Oslo)

Ingvild Øye (Bergen)

Richard W. Unger (Vancouver)

Piotr Gorecki (University of California at Riverside)

VOLUME 54

The titles published in this series are listed at brill.nl/nw.

Kings' Sagas and Norwegian History

Problems and Perspectives

By

Shami Ghosh



BRILL

LEIDEN • BOSTON
2011

Cover illustration: Copenhagen, Royal Library, GkS 1009 fol. ('Morkinskinna').
Photo: Arnamagnæan Institute, University of Copenhagen; reproduced with permission.

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Ghosh, Shami.

Kings' sagas and Norwegian history : problems and perspectives / by Shami Ghosh.
p. cm. — (The northern world : North Europe and the Baltic c. 400–1700 A.D. Peoples,
economies and cultures, 1569–1462 ; v. 54)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-90-04-20989-3 (hardback : alk. paper)

1. Sagas—History and criticism. 2. Old Norse literature—History and criticism. 3. Norway—
Historiography. 4. Norway—History—To 1030—Sources. 5. Norway—History—1030–1397—
Sources. 6. Kings and rulers in literature. 7. Norway—Kings and rulers. 8. Literature and
history—Norway. I. Title. II. Series.

PT7184.G56 2011

948.1'01072—dc23

2011029158

ISSN 1569-1462

ISBN 978 90 04 20989 3

This publication has been typeset in the multilingual “Brill” typeface. With over
5,100 characters covering Latin, IPA, Greek, and Cyrillic, this typeface is especially
suitable for use in the humanities. For more information, please see www.brill.nl/brill-typeface.

Copyright 2011 by Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

Koninklijke Brill NV incorporates the imprints Brill, Global Oriental, Hotei Publishing,
IDC Publishers, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers and VSP.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in
a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical,
photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission from the publisher.

Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use is granted by Koninklijke Brill NV
provided that the appropriate fees are paid directly to The Copyright Clearance Center,
222 Rosewood Drive, Suite 910, Danvers, MA 01923, USA.
Fees are subject to change.

For Manini

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	ix
Abbreviations	xiii
1. Introduction	1
Medieval Norwegian History and the Problem of Sources	1
The Kings' Sagas (<i>konungasögur</i>)	4
Skaldic Verse	18
2. Skaldic Verse and Saga Prose: Transmission and Reliability	25
The Authenticity of Skaldic Verse	25
The Relationship of Verse and Prose	70
Summing Up: The Historical Value of the Kings' Sagas	95
Appendix: Þormóður Kolbrúnarskáld after the Battle of Stiklarstaðir	101
3. Non-Native Sources and Influence	111
The Anglo-Norman Background	111
The Broader Context of the Growth of Historical Writing in Iceland	131
Appendix: Parallel Narratives in Scandinavian and Foreign Sources	152
4. The Uses of the Past	177
Chronology	203
Bibliography	209
Concordance of Cited Passages from the 1932 and 2011 Editions of <i>Morkinskinna</i>	239
Index of Modern Scholars Cited.....	241
General Index	246

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The present monograph was completed while I was a doctoral student at the Centre for Medieval Studies in the University of Toronto, and I am grateful to the Centre and the University for the award of a scholarship for the duration of my studies. The first draft was written while I was partly funded by an Ontario Graduate Scholarship, and the manuscript was expanded and revised during subsequent years while I was funded by a Canada Graduate Scholarship; I thank the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for enabling my research. I should also like to thank the Interlibrary Loan staff at the John P. Robarts library in the University of Toronto, in particular Jane Lynch, for their unceasing efforts to supply me with obscure material from libraries all over North America and beyond, without which the writing of the present work would have been impossible. I am further grateful to the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies for granting access to their excellent library.

The final stages of writing this book took place while I was one of the inaugural fellows at the Jackman Humanities Institute in the University of Toronto, and I should like to thank the faculty fellows for electing me, and the director, Bob Gibbs, the associate director, Kim Yates, and the administrator, Monica Toffoli, for providing me with such a pleasant and efficient space to complete my graduate studies; I am also very grateful to all the JHI fellows of 2008–9 for making that year so intellectually stimulating and creating such a congenial and collegial atmosphere at the institute that it became like a second home to me. At the Centre for Medieval Studies in the University of Toronto, for five years, Grace Desa has, for me as for so many others, attended to all manner of administrative worries with extreme efficiency and amiableness; it is a pleasure to acknowledge my debt to her. Also at the Centre, I should like to thank Nick Everett and Sandy Murray (my dissertation supervisors), Lawrin Armstrong (the past associate director and acting director), John Magee (the current director), and Markus Stock; they have all been very helpful in guiding me during my time as a graduate student. Lawrin in particular has been especially kind in seeing me through an extremely difficult period in my life, and through his example and teaching he has shown me that it might indeed be possible to reconcile apparently conflicting aspects of my scholarly personality; I remain deeply grateful for his instruction and for

the fact that he continues to provide supportive friendship and stimulating and challenging conversation.

That I became a scholar at all is due largely to the early inspiration provided by Martin Jones and John White: Martin first initiated me into the study of medieval languages and literature, and without the example of his scholarship, his inspiring teaching, and the sheer warmth of his personality, my career would have taken a completely different course; John, my personal tutor for most of my undergraduate life, patiently guided my initial steps in academia and bore with my ceaseless email bombardment of questions and comments on all manner of academic issues, while also providing me with many useful glimpses of the 'inside' aspects of university life. Both of them showed me the way to realising my calling; the memory of their teaching is a continuing source of encouragement, and one of the primary reasons I remain in this profession.

Later in life, Steve Mitchell taught me Old Norse, and I hope he will be as satisfied with his former student's use of that teaching as I am grateful for the affability and humour that he imparted to his instruction, which made language classes with him such a pleasure.

Sandeep Kishore, Alma Mikulinsky and Mareike Neuhaus have provided encouragement and support in diverse ways (Sandeep throughout my adult life), and have helped me survive the dubious joys of life as a graduate student, while also teaching me much about the possibilities of scholarship and what it can mean to be a scholar, not least by reminding me repeatedly that there is an enriching and stimulating world outside one's own specialisation, which can often be what makes scholarship worth while. For their friendship and for innumerable conversations on wildly varied subjects ranging from Georges Perec and Franz Kafka to the nature of the urban night to the nervous systems of fish—all of which have enabled me to keep working on the unrelated matter of this study—I am deeply grateful.

Earlier versions of portions of this book were seen by the editors and reviewers of *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia*, and the *Saga-Book of the Viking Society*, and I am grateful to them for their comments, which have steered me away from a number of errors and helped me to sharpen many of my arguments. I am also deeply indebted to Russell Poole, whose very many penetrating comments on an earlier draft coupled with some lengthy discussions have made the final version much better than it would otherwise have been. At Brill, Marcella Mulder has been an invaluable source of assistance at every stage of preparing the manuscript for publication, for

which I am very grateful. Robert Avis, Erin Goeres, Alastair Matthews and Russell Poole all shared with me copies of their work prior to its publication, and I should like to record my thanks for their generosity.

Originating in a paper written for a course taken with Andy Orchard, it is only due to his unstinting encouragement, mentorship and support that I have been able to bring the present work (and other things besides) to completion. Truly *lareowa manna mildust ond monðwærust, leorningcnihtum liðost ond leofost*, Andy has been in the best sense of the word my *Doktorvater* from the start of my life in Toronto, and indeed has the dubious distinction of having served in that role twice simultaneously, as an advisor for one book (my dissertation), and as ‘supervisor’ of the production of another one (the present study). He has given me an (admittedly unattainable) model of scholarship to aspire to for the rest of my career; my continuing belief in my vocation and in myself, as well as my academic development in the past several years (and whatever continuing sanity I preserve) owe more to him than I can express, and I am profoundly honoured and grateful to be thus indebted to him.

Finally, I should like to thank Manini Sheker, who has endured more talk of Norse kennings and Norwegian kings than anyone should have to, and has put up with a husband waking up dreaming of sagas’ textual affiliations, for far too many years; this book is dedicated to her, with all my love.

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AD</i>	<i>Archiv für Diplomatik.</i>
<i>Ágrip</i>	<i>Ágrip af Nóregskonungasögum</i> , cited from: Bjarni Einarsson, ed. 1985. “Ágrip af Nóregskonunga sögum”. In <i>Ágrip–Fagurskinna</i> , 1–54. ÍF 29. Reykjavík: Hið íslenzka fornritafélag.
<i>ANF</i>	<i>Arkiv för nordisk filologi.</i>
<i>AQDGM</i>	Ausgewählte Quellen zur deutschen Geschichte des Mittelalters.
<i>ASC</i>	<i>Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.</i>
<i>ASE</i>	<i>Anglo-Saxon England.</i>
<i>BA</i>	Bibliotheca Arnamagnæana.
<i>CM</i>	<i>Collegium Medievale.</i>
<i>CSML</i>	Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature.
<i>CSS</i>	Variorum Collected Studies Series.
<i>EA</i>	Editiones Arnamagnæanae.
<i>EM</i>	Europa im Mittelalter.
<i>EME</i>	<i>Early Medieval Europe.</i>
<i>ERGA</i>	Ergänzungsbände zum Reallexikon der germanischen Altertumskunde.
<i>FbS</i>	<i>Fóstbræðra saga</i> , cited from: Björn K. Þórólfsson and Guðni Jónsson, eds. 1943. “Fóstbræðra saga”. In <i>Vestfirðinga sögur</i> , 119–276. ÍF 6. Reykjavík: Hið íslenzka fornritafélag.
<i>FmSt</i>	<i>Frühmittelalterliche Studien.</i>
<i>Fsk</i>	<i>Fagrskinna</i> , cited from: Bjarni Einarsson, ed. 1985. “Fagrskinna–Nóregs konunga tal”. In <i>Ágrip–Fagurskinna</i> , 55–373. ÍF 29. Reykjavík: Hið íslenzka fornritafélag.
<i>FskF</i>	Alison Finlay, trans. 2004. <i>Fagrskinna, a Catalogue of the Kings of Norway: A Translation with Introduction and Notes</i> . TNW 7, Leiden: Brill.
<i>GAG</i>	Göppinger Arbeiten zur Germanistik.
<i>HARN</i>	Theodoricus Monachus, <i>Historia de Antiquitate regum Norwagensium</i> , cited from: Gustav Storm, ed. 1880. “Theodorici monachi Historia de antiquitate rerum Norwagensium”. In <i>Monumenta historica Norvegiæ: Latinske kildeskrifter til Norges historie i middelalderen</i> , 1–68. Kristiania [Oslo]: A. W. Brøgger.

<i>Hkr</i>	<i>Heimskringla</i> , cited from: Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson, ed. 1941–51. <i>Snorri Sturluson: Heimskringla</i> . 3 vols. ÍF 26–8. Reykjavik: Hið íslenska fornritafélag.
<i>HkrH</i>	Lee M. Hollander, trans. 1964. <i>Heimskringla: History of the Kings of Norway</i> . Austin: University of Texas Press.
<i>HN</i>	<i>Historia Norwegie</i> , cited from: Inger Ekrem and Lars Boje Mortensen, eds. 2003. <i>Historia Norwegie</i> . Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press (with a translation of the text by Peter Fisher).
HSL	History of Scandinavian Literatures.
<i>HT(D)</i>	<i>Historisk Tidsskrift (Denmark)</i> .
<i>HT(N)</i>	<i>Historisk tidsskrift (Norway)</i> .
ÍF	Íslensk fornrit.
<i>Ísl</i>	Jakob Benediktsson, ed. 1968. “Íslendingabók”. In <i>Íslendingabók–Landnámabók</i> : 1–28. ÍF 1. Reykjavik: Hið íslenska fornritafélag.
<i>JEGP</i>	<i>Journal of English and Germanic Philology</i> .
KT	Kröners Taschenausgabe.
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica.
SRG	Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi.
<i>MlatJB</i>	<i>Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch</i> .
<i>MS</i>	<i>Mediaeval Scandinavia</i> .
<i>Msk</i>	<i>Morkinskinna</i> , cited from: Finnur Jónsson, ed. 1932. <i>Morkinskinna</i> . SUGNL 53. Copenhagen: Jørgensen.
<i>MskAG</i>	Theodore M. Andersson and Kari Ellen Gade, trans. 2000. <i>Morkinskinna: The Earliest Icelandic Chronicle of the Norwegian Kings (1030–1157)</i> . Islandica 51. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
MTCNE	Medieval Texts and Cultures of Northern Europe.
<i>Ólhelg</i>	<i>Óláfs saga hins helga</i> (the <i>Legendary saga</i> of Saint Óláfr), cited from: Anne Heinrichs, Doris Jahnsen, Elke Radicke and Hartmut Röhn, eds and trans. 1982. <i>Óláfs saga hins helga: Die “Legendarische Saga” über Olaf den Heiligen</i> . Heidelberg: Carl Winter.
OM	Orbis medievalis.
Rolls Series	Rerum Britannicarum medii aevi scriptores.
RUB	Reclams Universal-Bibliothek.
<i>SBVS</i>	<i>Saga-Book of the Viking Society</i> .
SEM	Studies in the Early Middle Ages.

<i>SJH</i>	<i>Scandinavian Journal of History.</i>
SMS	Studia mediaevalia septentrionalia.
<i>SO</i>	<i>Symbolae Osloenses.</i>
SPSMA	Skaldic Poetry of the Scandinavian Middle Ages.
SS	<i>Scandinavian Studies.</i>
SUGNL	Samfund til udgivelse af gammel nordisk litteratur.
TNW	The Northern World.
TONIS	Toronto Old Norse-Icelandic Studies.
TUGS	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Germanistik und Skandinavistik.
UMIS	University of Manitoba Icelandic Studies.
VC	The Viking Collection.
VMPIG	Veröffentlichungen des Max-Planck-Instituts für Geschichte.
<i>VMS</i>	<i>Viking and Medieval Scandinavia.</i>
VSNR TS	Viking Society for Northern Research, Text Series.
ZDA	<i>Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum.</i>

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Medieval Norwegian History and the Problem of Sources

As is the case with the other medieval Scandinavian kingdoms—and unlike, for example, England or France—there are few written sources for the history of Norway from before c.1200.¹ Those wishing to study the earlier history of Norway, Denmark and Sweden must rely primarily on archaeological data as the only truly contemporary native evidence. Of the surviving texts, documentary material is only extant in reasonable quantity from c.1200 (somewhat earlier for Denmark; somewhat later for Sweden); the prior past of these three kingdoms is accessible in the written record primarily through narratives composed during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, which tell of the history of Scandinavia from pre-historic times right up to the authors' present. In most cases, especially for the period before the twelfth century, these texts cannot be checked against external evidence, although there do exist a few narratives produced outside Scandinavia, which occasionally provide some (normally very sketchy) contemporary accounts from the ninth century onwards. A further potential problem is that many of the extant texts were composed by Icelanders; Iceland was a more-or-less independent commonwealth until 1262–4, though its poets and magnates often served in the courts of various Scandinavian kings. As is the case with the kingdoms, there are no contemporary native narratives of Icelandic history from before the twelfth century. Using the extant texts thus often means seeing Scandinavian history through an Icelandic lens, and considering the extent to which this reflects the views of the other peoples of Scandinavia.

Contemporary written narratives of Danish history begin somewhat earlier than for the rest of Scandinavia, probably because Denmark was

¹ I exclude runes from this study; although useful for social and linguistic history, they rarely contain any narrative or information relevant for political history. For orientation on runic scholarship, see Düwel's brief survey (2004); and in more detail: Page (1987b), and Sawyer (2000). Specifically on Norwegian runes: Spurkland (2005).

geographically closer to continental Europe, and perhaps also because the Danish king Knútr (Canute) ruled England during the early eleventh century, and England was already home to a more flourishing literary culture than anywhere in eleventh-century Scandinavia.² Danish historical writing begins with hagiography around the year 1100; more secular histories commence in the 1130s with annalistic works. The *Chronicon Roskildense* (c.1140)³ is the earliest Danish (and Scandinavian) history with more of a narrative content. We have also, apart from the thirteenth-century vernacular works (produced largely by Icelanders), the brief history of Sven Aggesen (c.1185–c.1188)⁴ and the voluminous history of Saxo Grammaticus (c.1208)⁵ in Latin.

Latin historical writing in Norway begins in the middle of the twelfth century, but no works on Norwegian history before the thirteenth-century vernacular compendia can begin to compare with the scope of Saxo's Danish history.⁶ There are no Latin histories specifically of Sweden from this period; vernacular works date from the middle of the thirteenth century or later. The most detailed accounts of the histories of these kingdoms are provided in the vernacular Old Norse texts known collectively as the 'kings' sagas' (*konungasögur*), which were written down in the decades around 1200, and are thought to have been composed, almost exclusively, by Icelanders.⁷ The present study is concerned with the sagas on Norwegian kings of the past (and thus excludes sagas on contemporary kings), which predate, as far as can be ascertained, the vernacular works

² For an account of early Danish literature, see Colbert (1992: 5–18). An excellent recent history of Knútr's reign is provided by Bolton (2009); discussion of some of the difficulties presented by the few native sources that might be contemporary is given in Townend (2001; 2002a; 2005).

³ Gertz (ed. 1917–22, i: 14–33).

⁴ Gertz (ed. 1915–16). For a translation with a good introduction: Christiansen (trans. 1992).

⁵ Friis-Jensen and Zeeberg (ed. and trans. 2005). For extensively annotated English translations: Ellis Davidson and Fisher (trans. 1979–80) (books I–IX); Christiansen (trans. 1980–1) (books X–XVI). For a recent introduction: Riis (2006).

⁶ There is little literature that is normally considered 'Norwegian' from before c.1200; see, however, Knirk (1993: 10–32), for a discussion of the beginnings of Norwegian literature that complicates this picture somewhat. The problem of national designations arises from the close relations between Iceland and the rest of Scandinavia, the Icelandic origins of many of the extant manuscripts, and the fact that many texts seem to have had audiences, and also some kind of (probably oral) antecedents, in Norway.

⁷ For accessible introductions to the kings' sagas: Ármann Jakobsson (2005); Sverrir Tómasson (2006: 98–122); see also Knirk (1993: 28–32). Theodore Andersson's magisterial survey of scholarship up to c.1980 remains indispensable (1985); it is complemented by Whaley (1993a).

about the Danish and Swedish kings; with the exception of the Roskilde chronicle, the Latin histories of Norway (which are somewhat lengthier than the Roskilde chronicle) also appear to have been the earliest native Scandinavian secular histories, preceding Sven Aggesen by some years, and Saxo by a few decades.

Since there exist a number of different sagas of Norwegian kings, all of which, however, cover largely the same events, the efforts of earlier scholarship were principally directed to explicating the relationships between the various texts, and to identifying their sources. Only in the past two decades has significant effort been given to illuminating the role(s) of these works within their social, historical and literary contexts.⁸ The issues include, for example, the authenticity of the information provided; the authors' concepts of history and truth; and the kinds of influences, literary or otherwise, under which the narratives were produced. The aim of the present work is threefold: to present a critical overview of the recent research on these newer topics of interest; to highlight some of the more important problems posed by the source material; and to suggest some pathways for further research.⁹ Furthermore, it is hoped that this monograph might also provide some pointers as to how the study of the kings' sagas could be better integrated into the larger field of scholarship on medieval European historiography: in her survey of 1993, Diana Whaley stated that "one of the greatest challenges in this area still to be met is to establish how the *konungasögur* relate to other medieval European historiography",¹⁰ and while there have been some significant studies attempting to meet this challenge, there remains much work yet to be done on this aspect of the kings' sagas.

In the remainder of the present chapter, I provide an overview of the sagas, their content and dates of composition, as well as their principal cited sources: the skaldic verse that the saga authors use as authentication for their narratives. Chapter two presents a detailed consideration of the issues arising in connection with the use in the sagas of verse that

⁸ Some of the newer avenues of scholarship were already signalled by Diana Whaley (1993a); on *Heimskringla* (*Hkr*), a study opening up new areas of scholarship was presented by Bagge (1991).

⁹ Note that this is not intended to be a comprehensive survey of research; the focus is on works since c.1985, and on studies most relevant for the principal themes of the present work. Earlier scholarship and studies of cognate research fields have been cited very selectively, though I have tried in all instances to indicate the standard syntheses or works of reference.

¹⁰ Whaley (1993a: 57).

is thought to be contemporary with the events reported in the sagas, and how this verse relates to the prose narrative in which it is embedded. Chapter three examines the possibility of influence from non-Scandinavian sources on the composition of the sagas, and suggests that more attention needs to be given to the cultural traffic around the North Sea in the years c.1000–c.1200 in order better to understand how the kings' sagas relate to the wider sphere of medieval European historiography, which experienced a significant period of development on the continent and in England from around 1100 onwards. The last chapter considers the function of the kings' sagas in their contemporary political context, and also raises some questions arising from the fact that they were composed by Icelanders, at a time when Iceland was increasingly coming under Norwegian domination.

The Kings' Sagas (konungasögur)

Non-hagiographical historical writing in Scandinavia begins in the twelfth century, and the first extant historical work is Ari Þorgilsson's *Libellus Islandorum* or *Íslendingabók* (*Ísl*),¹¹ a narrative of the settlement and conversion of Iceland (Ari lived from 1068 to 1148; the first, no-longer extant version of *Ísl* was written c.1125, and the second by 1133).¹² According to all extant accounts, Iceland was settled primarily from Norway, and

¹¹ For orientation: Hermann (2007); Sverrir Tómasson (2006: 76–80); Whaley (2000: 169–72). For more detailed interpretation: Duke (2001); Mundal (1994); and the introduction and notes in Grønlie (trans. 2006). In the following, I provide page references to English translations of cited medieval primary sources, where available. Where I cite the original from an edition with facing-page translations, no further references are given for the latter. Where I refer only to verse, if the verse numbering is identical in the original and the translation, no references are given for the latter. However, the reference to a published English translation does *not* indicate that that is the translation actually presented in the present text: all translations provided here are my own, unless explicitly stated otherwise. The verse is cited from editions of the sagas in which it appears; references to the new editions (with translations) of the complete corpus of skaldic poetry are also given where available, and these should in every case be consulted for the current state of scholarship. Note that although portions of many of the texts cited below are also translated in the readers of Page (1995) and Somerville and McDonald (2010), I provide no individual references to these latter works, which are more useful for a synoptic overview in translation of the primary sources than for consulting individual texts.

¹² For an introduction to historical writing in Iceland (excluding works of contemporary history): Whaley (2000); see also Würth (2005), for a very brief introduction placed within a broader context of literature dealing with the past.

Icelanders remained interested in the history of the land of their origin.¹³ Ari tells us that he had included “konunga ævi” (“kings’ lives”) in the first version of *Ísl*.¹⁴ It is not known which kings he dealt with, or in how much detail. However, there is a reference in *Heimskringla* (*Hkr*), written in the thirteenth century, to Ari as the first to write in Norse, and the author apparently knew Ari’s work on the kings, so it appears to be the case that Ari’s “konunga ævi” remained available in some form at least till the early thirteenth century.¹⁵ Ari’s was possibly the second work written on the

¹³ For more nuanced perspectives, cf. the critical studies on the settlement of Iceland by Adolf Friðriksson and Orri Vésteinsson (2003), Orri Vésteinsson (1998), and Sayers (1994).

¹⁴ *Ísl*: 3 (Grønlie, trans. 2006: 1).

¹⁵ “Ari prestr inn fróði Þorgilsson, Gellissonar, ritaði fyrstr manna hér á landi at norrœnu máli frœði, bæði forna ok nýja [...] Hann tók þar ok við mǫrg ǫnnur dæmi, bæði konunga ævi í Nóregi ok Danmǫrk ok sva á Englandi eða enn stórtiðendi, er ǫrzk hǫfðu hér á landi” (*Hkr* I: 5–7; *HkrH*: 4–5: “The priest Ari the Wise, son of Þorgils, son of Gellir, was the first of men in this land to write lore in the northern tongue, both old and new [...] He also included many other narratives, both the lives of kings in Norway and Denmark and of the kings of England or any major events which had taken place here in this land”). Similar praise occurs in the prologue to the *Separate saga* on Óláfr helgi Haraldsson (*Hkr* II: 419–22), and in more condensed form in *Óláfs saga helga* (*Hkr* II: 326; *HkrH*: 473). There are also explicit references to Ari as a source for chronological information in both versions of *Óláfs saga helga* (*Hkr* II: 410; *HkrH*: 533): “Óláfr konungr inn helgi var þá hálfertǫgr at aldri, er hann fell, at sögu Ara prests ins fróða” (“King Óláfr the Holy was thirty-five years old when he fell, according to the narrative of priest Ari the Wise”); *Hkr* II: 431 (this comes from the prologue to the *Separate saga* and is not translated by *HkrH*): “Pat var tveim vetrum síðar en Hákon konungr fell, at sögu Ara prests ins fróða Þorgilssonar” (“That was two winters since King Hákon fell, according to the narrative of priest Ari Þorgilsson the Wise”); and in *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar* (*Hkr* I: 239; *HkrH*: 153–4): “Svá segir Ari prestr Þorgilsson, at Hákon jarl væri þrettán vetr yfir fǫðurleifð sinni í Þrándheimi, áðr Haraldr gráfeldr fell, en sex vetr ina síðustu, er Haraldr gráfeldr lifði, segir Ari, at Gunnhildarsynir ok Hákon þórðusk” (“Priest Ari Þorgilsson says that Jarl Hákon spent thirteen years on his patrimony in Trondheim before Haraldr gráfeldr fell, and during the last six winters that Haraldr gráfeldr lived, Ari says, the sons of Gunnhildr and Hákon fought each other”). *Hkr* names Oddr Kolsson, grandson of Hallr af Síða, as Ari’s source for the *ævi Nóregskonunga* (*Hkr* I: 6; *HkrH*: 4): “Hann ritaði, sem hann sjálf segir, ævi Nóregskonunga eptir sögu Odds Kollsonar, Hallssonar af Síðu, en Oddr nam at Þorgeiri afráðskoll, þeim manni, er vitr var ok svá gamall, at hann bjó þá í Niðarnesi, er Hákon jarl inn ríki var drepinn” (“He wrote, as he himself says, the lives of the kings of Norway following the narrative of Oddr Kolsson, the son of Hallr of Síða, and Oddr got his information from Þorgeir, a man who was wise and so old that he settled there in Niðarnes when Jarl Hákon the Mighty was killed”); Hallr is said in *Hkr* to have been one of the first Icelanders converted to Christianity in the reign of Óláfr Tryggvason (*Hkr* I: 319–20; *HkrH*: 209): “[Þangbrandr] kom til Íslands í Austfjörðu í Álptaþjórd inn syðra ok var eptir um vetrinn með Halli á Síðu. Þangbrandr boðaði kristni á Íslandi, ok af hans orðum lét Hallr skirask ok hjón hans ǫll ok margir aðrir hǫfðingjar” (“Þangbrandr arrived in Iceland in South Álptaþjórd in the East Fjörð district, and lived with Hallr af Síða that year. Þangbrandr preached Christianity in Iceland, and because of his words Hallr had himself baptised, along with all his household, and many other chieftains as well”). Ari does not actually name Oddr as an informant, doubtless because the extant text of *Ísl* no longer includes the Norwegian kings’ lives; in his account of the

subject: the priest Sæmundr Sigfússon (1056–1133) is referred to in Oddr Snorrason's saga of Óláfr Tryggvason (c.1190) as a source,¹⁶ and a reference in a poem known as *Nóregs konungatal*, thought to have been composed c.1190 and preserved in the *Flateyjarbók* manuscript of c.1390, seems to indicate that Sæmundr narrated the lives of the ten kings following Haraldr hárfagri.¹⁷ This is all we know about Sæmundr's work; given that Ari is said in *Hkr* to have been the first to write in the vernacular, it is likely that Sæmundr wrote in Latin. Clearly, both Ari's and Sæmundr's histories were available in the years around 1200, and were thus potential sources for the writers of the many still-extant histories composed in this period. Nevertheless, we should stress that even these earliest written sources do not date from before the twelfth century; if Sæmundr started with Haraldr hárfagri Hálfðanarson, he wrote about a king who lived two centuries before his own time.

Ari's and Sæmundr's works on the Norwegian kings of the past are now lost; the extant texts (excluding histories of contemporary kings in the thirteenth century) may be divided into three categories: the so-called Norwegian synoptics, which comprise the vernacular *Ágrip af Nóregs*

conversion too, Hallr is the first named Icclander to be converted, though Ari also actually gives the names of many of the "margir aðrir hofðingjar" (*Ísl*: 14; Grønlie, trans. 2006: 7). For discussion of *Hkr*'s use of Ari, cf. Sverrir Tómasson (1988, 279–90), who argues that the "konunga ævi" was an important source, not just of information, but also of ideology, providing the framework on which the *Hkr*-author elaborated. On the narrative of conversion as presented in *Ísl* and later sources, see Jochens (1999: 645–7).

¹⁶ "ok þessir menn samþykkjask, Sæmundr enn fróði ok Ari enn fróði Þorgilssonr" (Ólafur Halldórsson, ed. 2006b: 209 (MS S; MS A diverges only slightly); Andersson, trans. 2003: 74: "and these men, Sæmundr the Wise and Ari Þorgilsson the Wise, agree on this"); "þessa þings getr Sæmundr prestr hinn fróði, er ágætr var at speki" (MS A); "ok þessa getr Sæmundr enn fróði, at hann samnaði saman seiðmönnum" (MS S); "ok slíkt sama segir Sæmundr frá Óláfi konungi, at hann samnaði saman miklu fjölmenni í Niðarnesi af seiðmönnum" (MS S) (Ólafur Halldórsson, ed. 2006b: 232–3; Andersson, trans. 2003: 85: "priest Sæmundr the Wise, who was famous for his wisdom, reports about this assembly" (MS A); "and Sæmundr the Wise reports that he [sc. Óláfr Tryggvason] assembled wizards" (MS S); "and Sæmundr also says the same about King Óláfr, that he assembled a great multitude of wizards at Niðarnes" (MS S)).

¹⁷ "Nú hefk talt / tíu landreka, / þás hverr vas / frá Haraldi. / Inntak sva / ævi þeira, / sem Sæmundr / sagði inn fróði" (Gade, ed. and trans. 2009, ii: 761–81, at p. 784, st. 36: "Now I have recounted the ten rulers, each of whom was descended from Haraldr; I have told their lives as Sæmundr the wise said"). *Flateyjarbók* is edited by Guðbrandur Vigfússon and C. R. Unger (eds 1860–8); on this compilation, cf. Rowe (2006); Würth (1991); both are concerned only with specific sections known as *þættir* (discussed further below). On *Nóregs konungatal*, in addition to Gade's edition, cf. Sverrir Tómasson (2002).

konungasögum (Ágrip; c.1190),¹⁸ and the *Historia Norwegie* (HN; c.1150–c.1200)¹⁹ and *Historia de Antiquitate regum Norwagensium* of Theodoricus Monachus (HARN; c.1180), both in Latin;²⁰ the three vernacular compendia, *Morkinskinna* (Msk; c.1220),²¹ *Fagrskinna* (Fsk; c.1225),²² and *Heimskringla* (Hkr; c.1225–c.1235),²³ and finally, a number of independent hagiographic sagas about the two Óláfrs held (in most medieval, and also many modern accounts) to be primarily responsible for the conversion of Norway and Iceland:²⁴ Óláfr Tryggvason (reigned 995–1000), who was the subject of two Latin lives by the Icelandic monks Oddr Snorrason (c.1190; this survives only in an Icelandic translation made c.1200) and Gunnlaugr

¹⁸ I cite Bjarni Einarsson (ed. 1985a); an alternative edition and translation is given by Driscoll (ed. and trans. 1995).

¹⁹ The date of the *Historia Norwegie* has occasioned some controversy: according to its most recent editor it was most probably written between the years 1160–75 (Mortensen 2003: 24), but opinions have varied widely; an overview of the discussion is in Mortensen (2003: 11–24). An alternative translation to that by Peter Fisher (published with Ekrem and Mortensen's edition), is provided in Kunin and Phelpstead (trans. 2001); references to the latter are not, however, given below.

²⁰ A heavily annotated translation is provided by McDougall and McDougall (trans. 1998).

²¹ I have normalised the spacing between words and expanded abbreviations, but retained the orthography given in Finnur Jónsson's edition; Unger's edition (1867) has also been consulted, though only cited from in a few instances, which are explicitly indicated. Andersson and Gade's translation (MskAG) provides a concordance of verses and episodes. The new edition of Msk (2011) was released too late to be incorporated into the present work; a concordance of cited passages has been provided to enable ease of reference.

²² FskF provides a heavily annotated translation, which includes cross-references to verse numbering in editions of the other compendia, and also gives the page numbers Bjarni Einarsson's edition, cited in the present work.

²³ A translation of the whole text is given by Lee M. Hollander (HkrH; the verse numbers in parenthesis refer to the numbers in Bjarni's Aðalbjarnarson's edition); his translations of verse must always be checked against the translations in the new edition of skaldic poetry (Gade, ed. and trans. 2009; Whaley, ed. and trans. forthcoming; note that although these are collaborative editions, for ease of reference they are cited only by the name of the volume editor, rather than by the name of the editor and translator of each individual poem). The saga of Haraldr Sigurðarson from Hkr is translated separately by Magnus Magnusson and Hermann Pálsson (trans. 1966), who present a more readable text of the verses than HkrH, but for the sake of consistency, I have given references only to Hollander's complete translation.

²⁴ The view provided by the sagas, that the two Óláfrs were responsible for a more or less top-down process of conversion, is no longer generally accepted. On the conversion of Norway: Bagge (2005); Bagge and Nordeide (2007); specifically on the efforts of Hákon góði (Aðalsteinsfóstri) Haraldsson in Norway: Williams (2001). On the conversion in Iceland: for brief surveys, see Byock (2001: 292–7); Kaufhold (2001: 75–81); and for a more detailed presentation: Jochens (1999). For a stimulating critique of past scholarship, see Orri Vésteinsson (2000). On the contrasting Icelandic and Norwegian narratives of the conversion of Iceland, see also Weber (1981).

Leifsson (c.1200);²⁵ and Óláfr helgi Haraldsson, who was the subject of two, now-lost, Latin hagiographical accounts and a still-extant *Passio et miracula beati Olavi*²⁶ (all probably composed in the middle years of the twelfth century), and about whom a number of vernacular sagas were also written. One of these is now lost; another, the so-called *Legendary saga* (*Ólhelg*), was composed c.1200, and might have been a source for the compendia, certainly appearing to draw on much of the same material; the third, Styrmir Kárason's saga, drawing on earlier accounts, is also now largely lost (fragments survive in *Flateyjarbók*), but was apparently used by the author of *Hkr* for his saga of Óláfr helgi.²⁷ In addition, there is the poem *Nóregs konungatal*, already referred to above, which provides very brief accounts (generally one or two verses) of the kings from Hálfðan svarti (late ninth century) to Sverrir (1177).

In the years around 1200, other works narrating Scandinavian history were also written, which may have been known to the authors of the vernacular sagas in the compendia. Some, such as *Orkneyinga saga*, which dealt with the earls of the Orkneys, and **Færeyinga saga*, on the Faroe islands (the latter work only survives from excerpts in the sagas on the two Óláfrs), are considered to be relatively 'historical' in their value, and are also thought to be fairly early, perhaps composed in the first decades of the thirteenth century, contemporaneously with the compendia. Others, such as *Jómsvíkinga saga* (composed c.1200–c.1230), about a viking group said to have been based on the Baltic shore of Germany, and **Skjöldunga saga* (a history of the Danish Skjöldung dynasty; this survives only in a much later Latin translation), are more legendary in nature and

²⁵ Gunnlaugr's work only survives in fragments translated in the late-thirteenth-century *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar hin mesta*; the present study, however, only considers sagas up to the three compendia. The Norse translation of Oddr's history is edited by Ólafur Halldórsson (ed. 2006b), and translated by Andersson (trans. 2003).

²⁶ The text is in Metcalfe (ed. 1881); it is translated by Kunin and Phelpstead (trans. 2001).

²⁷ On the place of the sagas on the two Óláfrs in literary history, cf. Andersson (2006: 21–59); Phelpstead (2007) presents a study of hagiographic kings' sagas that asserts strongly the links between hagiographic traditions and the kings' sagas (specifically on the sagas on Óláfr helgi Haraldsson: 117–56); Laity (2004) provides a comparative study of the depiction of Óláfr in the *Ólhelg* and in *Hkr*. See also Fidjestøl (1997a; 1997c) for discussions of *Hkr*'s accounts of the two kings and possible influences on these narratives; Bagge (2006) on the formation of hagiographic traditions around Óláfr Tryggvason, with extensive further references; and Foerster (2009: 79–95), for a brief discussion of the 'southern' influence on northern hagiographic traditions about the two Óláfrs and Knútr. For an introduction to religious literature in medieval Iceland: Sverrir Tómasson (2006: 158–73); specifically on hagiographic sagas: Cormack (2000; 2005).

are considered closer to the genre of *fornaldarsögur* (normally rendered in English as 'legendary sagas', though actually meaning 'sagas of ancient times').²⁸ Two other histories are also known to have existed and thought to have had some influence on the composition of the extant kings' sagas: a history of the jarls of Hlaðir (**Hlaðarjarla saga*);²⁹ and **Hryggjarstykki*, probably a narrative primarily about Sigurðr slembir, a pretender to the Norwegian throne (died 1139), written by the Icelander Eiríkr Oddsson. The latter work was written around 1150 and is used by all three of the compendia;³⁰ it appears to have been the first independent (vernacular) kings' saga. Unlike the synoptics and compendia, which narrate for the most parts events of at least a generation ago, and none of which are concerned with contemporary history, **Hryggjarstykki* was clearly a record of current events, and was, according to *Hkr*, based on eyewitness accounts,

²⁸ *Orkneyinga saga* is edited by Finnbogi Guðmundsson (ed. 1965), and translated by Hermann Pálsson and Paul Edwards (trans. 1982); **Færeyinga saga* is edited by Ólafur Halldórsson (ed. 2006a) and translated by George Johnston (trans. 1975); *Jónsvíkinga saga* is edited and translated by N. F. Blake (ed. and trans. 1962); and **Skjöldunga saga* is edited by Bjarni Guðnason (ed. 1982b). The *fornaldarsögur* are a relatively neglected genre, and are, like the kings' sagas, narratives of the past. They are generally agreed to have been composed in their present form in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, though they might well go back to oral antecedents of some sort; the material they contain is inevitably related to events of the very distant past, which we would place in the eighth or ninth centuries, or earlier. An introduction is given by Sverrir Tómasson (2006: 145–51); for more detailed studies in English, see Mitchell (1991); Torfi Tulinius (2002; summarised in *idem* 2000).

²⁹ On this text and its possible later use, see Andersson (1998).

³⁰ *Msk* explicitly draws on a narrative by Eiríkr Oddsson, though to what extent *Msk* is actually dependent on **Hryggjarstykki* cannot be determined (*Msk*: 419; *MskAG*: 375: "Nv er at segia fra sonom Haralls konvngs Inga oc Sigurþi sem sagt hefir vitr maþr oc scynsamr Eric Oddzson"; "Now it shall be told about the sons of King Haraldr, Ingi and Sigurðr, as was narrated by Eiríkr Oddsson, a wise and sensible man"). Eiríkr's work is also referred to in *Hkr*, in which the title of the work is given: "Svá segir Eiríkr Oddsson, er fyrsta sinn reit þessa frásögn" (*Hkr* III: 313; *HkrH*: 743: "Thus says Eiríkr Oddsson, who wrote this narrative for the first time"); "Svá sagði Guðríðr Birgisdóttir, systir Jóns erkibiskups, Eríki Oddssyni, en hon lézk Ívar byskup heyra þat mæla" (*Hkr* III: 317; *HkrH*: 747: "Guðríðr Birgisdóttir, the sister of Archbishop Jón, told this to Eiríkr Oddsson, and she claimed that she heard Bishop Ívar say this"); "Eiríkr reit bók þá, er klluð er Hryggjarstykki. Í þeiri bók er sagt frá Haraldi gilla ok tveimr sonum hans ok frá Magnúsi blinda ok frá Sigurði slembi, allt til dauða þeira. Eiríkr var vitr maðr ok var in þenna tíma lönnum í Nóregi" (*Hkr* III: 318–19; *HkrH*: 748: "Eiríkr wrote the book which is called Hryggjarstykki. In this book is a narrative about Haraldr gilli and his two sons and about Magnús blindr and Sigurðr slembi, until their deaths. Eiríkr was a wise man and at that time he spent many years in Norway"); "Svá sagði Eiríki Ketill prófastr, er varðveitti Máriukirkju, at Sigurðr væri þar grafinn" (*Hkr* III: 320; *HkrH*: 749: "The provost Ketill, who had custody of St Mary's Church, told Eiríkr that Sigurðr was buried there"). *Fsk* contains no such explicit reference, but it has been suggested that the text "is indebted to **Hryggjarstykki* both as a direct source and indirectly via the influence of **Hryggjarstykki* on *Msk*" (Finlay 2004: 10).

as well as the fact that Eiríkr himself was, according to *Hkr*, in Norway for a long time.³¹

Mention should also be made of another such work of contemporary history that predates the compendia, but is still extant: *Sverris saga*, which was written about the king Sverrir Sigurðarson (reigned 1177–1202), at least in part by the Icelander Karl Jónsson, abbot of the Benedictine monastery at Þingeyrar.³² Although the present study excludes this text from consideration because the issues arising in a saga about a living king are of necessity rather different from those concerning narratives about kings in the more-or-less distant past, the methods and techniques used by the author of *Sverris saga* might well have influenced authors of the later compendia,³³ and its existence, at least, needs to be kept in mind. Furthermore, the synoptics were written during the period of civil war immediately preceding and during Sverrir's rule, and the compendia during the rule of his grandson Hákon Hákonarson; both reigns were contested (see further below). A study of the relationship between *Sverris saga* and the sagas of past kings might therefore well prove illuminating with regard to the political ideologies of the various saga authors and their perspectives on the changing face of Norwegian kingship and its relationship to Iceland during this turbulent period.

Sverris saga and the sagas of kings of regions other than Norway will be discussed briefly on occasion in the following chapters, but the present work makes no claim to provide a study of all the kings' sagas; only the compendia and, to a somewhat lesser extent, the synoptics, will receive

³¹ "Enn nefnir Eiríkr fleiri menn, er honum soggðu frá þessum tíðendum, vitrir ok san-nreyndir, ok váru nær, svá at þeir heyrðu eða sá atburðina, en sumt reit hann eptir sjálfs sín heyrn eða sýn" (*Hkr* III: 319; *HkrH*: 748: "And Eiríkr names many wise and reliable men who told him about these events, and who were nearby, so that they heard or saw what happened, and some things he wrote according to what he himself heard or saw"); cf. the previous footnote on Eiríkr's presence in Norway.

³² *Sverris saga* is edited by Þorleifur Hauksson (ed. 2007), and translated by Sephton (trans. 1899). On *Sverris saga* and the other major contemporary kings' saga, about Sverrir's grandson, *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar* (Mundt, ed. 1977; Dasent, trans. 1894; this was composed 1264–6, after the period of concern for this study), see Bagge (1996), and Orning (2008); for an introduction: Sverrir Tómasson (2006: 116–21). The date of composition of *Sverris saga* has been the object of some dispute; see most recently Orning (2008: 40–1) for discussion. At least part of it was written by Karl Jónsson in the 1180s, and the rest, perhaps by another author, in the first quarter of the thirteenth century. *Hákonar saga* is agreed to have been written by the Icelander Sturla Þórðarson, nephew of Snorri Sturluson and one of the last significant Icelandic skalds.

³³ Beyschlag (1986).

much detailed treatment.³⁴ In the following paragraphs, I provide brief introductions to these two groups of texts.³⁵

We do not possess the very beginning of *Ágrip*, but the extant text starts with the death of Hálfðan svarti, the father of Haraldr hárfagri, in c.880, and ends with the accession of Ingi krókhrygg Haraldsson in 1136. It is thought that the original text included all of the reign of Hálfðan, and continued till the accession of Sverrir in 1177, though there is no firm evidence of this.³⁶ Theodoricus's history spans about the same period, beginning with the reign of Haraldr Hálfðanarson, and concluding with Sigurðr Jórsalafari Magnússon in 1130; Theodoricus explicitly says that he stops here because he does not wish to write about the degenerate time that followed the death of Sigurðr.³⁷ Both texts do cite verse, but it is notable that Theodoricus, although referring to Icelandic verse as a historical source

³⁴ The reason for this is primarily a matter of scope; to consider the later, contemporary sagas, as well as the hagiographic texts on the Óláfrs, the more or less legendary material of *Skjöldunga saga* and *Knýtlinga saga* (on Knútr and his sons: Bjarni Guðnason, ed. 1982a; Hermann Pálsson and Edwards, trans. 1986), and the Latin histories of the Danish kings, would take the present work far beyond manageable proportions. Furthermore, the bulk of the literature on the kings' sagas, which it is the aim of the present work to survey, focuses on the compendia and the synoptics, primarily because of the overlap in material and sources, and also because staying with these works allows scholars to concentrate on themes relating to the histories of Norway and Iceland, and the relationships between the two countries. This is not to deny, however, that studies of the kings' sagas aiming for an understanding of their place in the historical consciousness of twelfth- and thirteenth-century Scandinavia would be enriched by including other works of past history, whether sagas of other kings, hagiographies, *Íslendingasögur* ('sagas of Icelanders' or 'family sagas'; see further below at n. 60), or *fornaldarsögur*, as only all such works taken together can begin to present a real glimpse into the value and function of the past in medieval Scandinavian society; almost all these works are contained, moreover, in Icelandic manuscripts (though not exclusively so), and are thus of relevance for understanding the Icelandic view of the past.

³⁵ No attempt is made in the following overview at a full exposition of the issues concerning authorship, date and textual relationships. For discussion of the textual relationships and dates, readers should consult, in the first instance, Andersson's survey (1985); the first port of call for further information on the synoptics, *Msk* and *Fsk* should be the introductions to the recent translations, listed in the bibliography; and for *Hkr*, Whaley (1991).

³⁶ Driscoll (1995: x).

³⁷ *HARN*: 67, ll. 6–13 (McDougall and McDougall, trans. 1998: 53, 11–18): "Nos quoque hujus schedulæ hic finem facimus, indignum valde judicantes memoriæ posterorum tradere scelera, homicidia, perjuria, parricidia, sanctorum locorum contaminationes, Dei contemptum, non minus religiosorum deprædationes quam totius plebis, mulierum captivationes et cetera abominationes, quas longum est enumerare. Quæ ita exuberaverunt quasi in unam sentinam post mortem prædicti Regis Siwardi" ("We shall, however, make an end to this little note here, judging it greatly unworthy to pass on to the memory of those to come the crimes, murders, perjuries, parricides, desecrations of holy places, the contempt of God, and the plunderings no less of the religious than of the whole people, the captures of women and other abominations, which it would take long to enumerate.

(see below), only ever explicitly cites Latin verse, and not as a historical source. *Ágrip*, on the other hand, while containing only seven verses, appears to be very much like the later sagas of the compendia in terms of the method in which verse is used, with verses fulfilling all the functions in which they are later employed by the authors of the compendia.³⁸

The *HN* is of a somewhat different nature from both these works: clearly modelled on non-Scandinavian Latin histories, and written in a more learned style than the *HARN*, it begins with a geographical description of Scandinavia, and then commences its report of Norwegian history with a narrative of the mythical Ynglingar dynasty, not recorded in either of the other two synoptics, or in *Fsk* or *Msk*.³⁹ It ends abruptly in the middle of Óláfr helgi Haraldsson's reign in 1015, but it is apparent from the prologue that the work was intended to continue up to the author's own time.⁴⁰ The *HN* appears to adopt a somewhat more sceptical stance than the other two synoptics—and the compendia—with regard to some of the received tradition about the Norwegian past (for example, the unification of Norway under Haraldr hárfagri or the survival of Óláfr Tryggvason after the battle of Svöldr; these events are discussed further in chapter two). All three works were composed by Norwegians,⁴¹ and appear to betray some measure of a Norwegian bias. Theodoricus's history is dedicated to Eysteinn Erlendsson (an opponent of King Sverrir Sigurðarson), archbishop of Niðaróss (now Trondheim); *Ágrip* also appears to have been composed in the Trøndelag area. The *HN* cannot be securely located, but Lars Boje Mortensen suggests that it was not associated with the see of

All of which overflowed as if in one cesspit after the death of the afore-mentioned King Sigurðr").

³⁸ O'Donoghue (2005: 25–45).

³⁹ Mortensen (2003: 17–18) identifies as its most important sources Adam of Bremen's *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesie pontificum* (written c.1065–c.1070; Schmiedler and Trillmich, eds and trans. 1968a) and Honorius of Autun's *Imago mundi* (written between 1110 and 1139; Flint, ed. 1983; note that the same author's *Elucidarius* was translated into Old Norse c.1200: see below, chapter three, n. 132), both of which could have incited the author to begin his work with a geographical introduction, which was quite commonplace in the continental Latin historiographical tradition, but does not occur in the other Norwegian works (note, though, that *Ynglinga saga* in *Hkr* contains a very brief geographical description of the northern lands: *Hkr* I: 9–10).

⁴⁰ "Si quid uero nostris temporibus memorie dignum accidisse repperi, hoc ipse addidi" (*pref.*: "And indeed if I found anything that happened in our own time worthy of being remembered, I have added it").

⁴¹ We should note, though, that *Ágrip* survives in an Icelandic manuscript; for discussion of the author's nationality, cf. Driscoll (1995: x–xii).

Niðaróss, originating rather in royal or episcopal circles from somewhere in eastern Norway, predating Sverrir's rise to power.⁴²

Nothing is known about the authors' ultimate Scandinavian sources for their narratives, though the lost histories of Ari and Sæmundr seem to be likely possibilities, and oral reports of some sort, whether verse or prose, Icelandic or Norwegian, must also have played a role. It seems certain that there was some relationship between the synoptics, though exactly what this was has not been conclusively determined.⁴³ Even though none of the synoptics is explicitly cited in any of the compendia, all three were potential sources for the latter's authors. All the synoptics are characterised by their brevity. For example, in the Íslensk fornrit edition, *Ágrip* covers 54 pages; in the same edition, the shortest of the compendia, *Fsk*, takes over 300 pages. One of the significant ways in which the compendia expand on the synoptics is by the introduction of verses, though the prose narratives are also far more detailed. A question that has often preoccupied earlier scholarship is the extent to which the authors of the synoptics also had access to any of the verse quoted in the compendia; this relates to the equally important question as to the purpose of the expansion in the later works. It should be noted that the time in which the compendia were written appears to have witnessed the rise of an increasingly stable and (relative to earlier ages) centralised monarchy in Norway, whereas the synoptics were written during a period of civil war.⁴⁴ On the other hand, the compendia were composed when Iceland was coming increasingly

⁴² Mortensen (2003: 22–4).

⁴³ Andersson (1985: 201–11); Mortensen (2003: 16–17)

⁴⁴ On this period of Norwegian history (c.1130–c.1270), during which the monarchy, after about a century of unrest, managed to gain the upper hand and some stability, and Iceland and the outlying regions of Norway were brought firmly under royal control, see Helle (2003); on the narratives and ideology of kingship, cf. Bagge (1987; 1996), and Orning (2008). Narrative accounts of this period are provided primarily in the kings' sagas (for Norway) and *Sturlunga saga* (for Iceland); the broad outline seems to be confirmed by the early documentary material that is extant from the thirteenth century. It should be noted that stability was only really achieved by the end of this period, and it would not have been apparent in the 1220s (when *Fsk* and *Msk* were probably written) that the newer forms of monarchical government would ultimately prevail. *Sturlunga saga* is a compilation of texts (belonging to the genre known as *samtíðarsögur*, 'contemporary sagas') dealing with Icelandic history between c.1117 and 1264; the title stems from the fact that much of its content treats of the Sturlungar, one of the most powerful families in Iceland in this period. The text is edited by Jón Jóhannesson, Magnús Finnbogason and Kristján Eldjárn (eds. 1946), and translated by Julia McGrew (trans. 1970–4). For introductions: Guðrún Nordal (2000); Úlfar Bragason (2005); more detailed studies are in Guðrún Nordal (1998); Tranter (1987).

under Norwegian control.⁴⁵ Thus the fact that such works, using a large amount of possibly Icelandic verse about Norwegian kings, were written during this period, is in itself one that raises many questions as to the texts' function in the political relationships between Icelanders and the Norwegian kings. Reference will often be made to the three synoptics in the chapters below, but because the compendia provide so much more detail, and also draw so significantly on verses that were purportedly composed at the time of the events reported—and were thus possibly sources for the synoptics, or might at least have been known to the authors of these texts—the focus will be on the three compendia.

Of these, *Msk* and *Hkr* seem certainly to have been composed by Icelanders; the nationality of the author of *Fsk* is a matter of some doubt, but he is generally thought to have been Norwegian. The oldest of the compendia is *Msk*, thought to have been composed c.1220, possibly at the monastery of Munkaþverá in Iceland.⁴⁶ It begins with the reign of Magnús góði Ólafsson (1034), and ends in 1177; by far the longest section is the joint saga of Magnús and Haraldr Sigurðarson. A significant feature of this text is its inclusion, within the sagas of kings, of a large number of *þættir* (plural of *þáttir*), short narratives about Icelanders abroad, which give the text as a whole a distinctly Icelandic perspective on Norwegian kingship.⁴⁷ It has long been the least studied of the three compendia, though this situation has now begun to be rectified with the major critical work of Theodore M. Andersson and Kari Ellen Gade in the introduction and apparatus to their translation, and Ármann Jakobsson's monograph devoted to *Msk*.⁴⁸ *Msk* is agreed to have been a source for both the other compendia; as to its own sources, it is not really possible to get beyond postulating some sort of combination of a vaguely-defined 'oral tradition', and some written works, including the lost **Hryggjarstykki*, and possibly some Anglo-

⁴⁵ On Icelandic political history in the civil war period, see Jón Jóhannesson (1974: 226–87) for the most accessible survey in English; more recent discussions are in Gunnar Karlsson (2004: 316–65); Jón Viðar Sigurðsson (2007); Sverrir Jakobsson (2009: 163–70). More generally, on Icelandic social and political structures up to the absorption of Iceland by Norway, see Byock (2001); Gunnar Karlsson (2004); Jón Viðar Sigurðsson (1999). Byock and Jón base themselves primarily on accounts from the *Íslendingasögur*, while Gunnar prefers the lawcode (*Grágas*) and *Sturlunga saga*.

⁴⁶ Andersson and Gade (2000: 66–72).

⁴⁷ For an introduction to *þættir*: Rowe and Harris (2005); further discussion is in chapter four.

⁴⁸ Andersson and Gade (2000); Ármann Jakobsson (2002).

Norman histories;⁴⁹ much of the material, especially the *þættir*, stems from no identifiable source.

Fsk is thought to have been composed c.1225,⁵⁰ and “is usually considered to have associations with the court of King Hákon”.⁵¹ It begins, like *Ágrip*, with Hálfðan svarti, and ends during the civil wars between Magnús Erlingsson’s faction and the Birkibeinar (Hákon’s grandfather Sverrir was supported by the latter group). It is unclear whether the author was Norwegian or Icelandic, without any compelling arguments for either nationality having been proposed; the text seems to be more favourable to the Norwegian kings than was *Msk*, but this does not make it necessarily less likely that the author was Icelandic.⁵² What is certain is that although the author of *Fsk* seems certainly to have known *Msk*, he elided almost all of the ‘Icelandic’ elements of the earlier compendium, leaving out the *þættir* about Icelanders that are such an important feature of the older work. But the *Fsk*-author did not just provide an expurgated version of *Msk*: he also clearly had sources not used, or used differently, in *Msk*; these probably included *Ágrip* and the sagas of the two Óláfrs. In addition, not all the verse cited in *Fsk* is also in the other compendia, with the author of *Fsk* sometimes appearing to include whatever verses he knew on a particular topic, without necessarily being very selective.

In this regard, as in many other things, *Hkr* differs from *Fsk*. Although there is no internal evidence in the text itself, *Hkr* is attributed to Snorri Sturluson, one of the most powerful *goðar* (chieftains; plural of *goði*) of Iceland in the first half of the thirteenth century (1178/9–1241).⁵³ Snorri sought (not entirely successfully) the patronage of Hákon Hákonarson, for whom he is thought to have composed *Háttatál*, a catalogue and commentary on skaldic verse forms; this poem is preserved as a part of the

⁴⁹ There is a thorough discussion of the oral and written sources in Andersson and Gade (2000: 11–65).

⁵⁰ See, however, Ólafía Einarsdóttir (2002) for a later dating of *Fsk* to c.1235.

⁵¹ Finlay (2004: 1).

⁵² Neither Norwegian nor Icelandic authorship of *Fsk* and *Ágrip* can be proven; Alison Finlay gives a tentative proposal of Icelandic authorship of *Fsk* (Finlay 2004: 15–17; O’Donoghue 2004: 96, also believes that *Fsk* was composed by an Iclander). We should note that Finlay’s argument rests largely on the belief that Norwegians would not have had much facility with verse, which seems to be an implausible assumption (the poets’ ethnicity is discussed further in chapter two). One could even argue that the author of *Fsk* chooses to follow the form of *Msk* not because he is Icelandic, but because he is not: in order to present, using an ‘Icelandic’ form of the compendium, a more positive image of the Norwegian kings than that given by *Msk*.

⁵³ On the nature of the power of the *goðar* and its exercise, cf. Gunnar Karlsson (2004); Jón Viðar Sigurðsson (1999).

work known as known as *Snorra Edda*, a discourse on mythology and poetics, which modern scholars and one medieval manuscript attribute to Snorri.⁵⁴

There is no unequivocal contemporary evidence in support of the belief that Snorri composed *Hkr*, and even if Snorri did author the text, there could be a substantial difference between what he wrote and the surviving manuscript versions. The authorship of *Hkr* has been much debated, with Patricia Pires Boulhosa recently providing a very critical view; other recent sceptical voices include Alan Berger, Margaret Cormack, Jon Gunnar Jørgensen and Jonna Louis-Jensen.⁵⁵ Berger, particularly controversially, points out that the circumstantial evidence for Snorri's authorship could equally well be applied to *Fsk* instead of *Hkr*; he also suggests that *Hkr* might have been written decades later than the prevailing scholarly consensus. In another major recent work on the kings' sagas, Tommy Danielsson, although open to scepticism, continues to refer to *Hkr*'s author as Snorri;⁵⁶ Whaley, in the standard introduction to *Hkr* in English, also accepts the view that Snorri was the author of *Hkr*.⁵⁷

Because of the difficulties involved with identifying Snorri as the author of *Hkr*, in the following I do not do so, though, given that there is no certainty either way on this issue, I do not discount the possibility, and on occasion I do raise certain arguments that are related to Snorri's life and how that might have influenced the composition of *Hkr*. We should note also that an independent saga about Óláfr helgi Haraldsson (the so-called *Separate saga*), much of which is, however, incorporated within *Hkr*, is also attributed to Snorri; regardless of whether he was the author or not,

⁵⁴ For introductions to Snorri's life and the issues relating to his authorship of *Hkr*: Bagge (1991: 1–63); Ciklamini (1978: 16–42); Whaley (1991: 13–40). On Snorri's *Edda*, see in brief Abram (2011: 24–7; 207–21), and Clunies Ross (2005: 157–84). Wanner (2008) is the most recent monographic study of the purpose and function of this text, and includes an up-to-date discussion of Snorri's life and political activities in relation to his literary pursuits (16–93), though scarcely mentioning *Hkr*. *Snorra Edda* is edited and translated by Anthony Faulkes (ed. 1982–98; trans. 1995). On the authorship of the prologue to Snorri's *Edda*, see also von See (1999: 275–310), who believes that the prologue is too theologically informed to have been composed by Snorri.

⁵⁵ Berger (1999); Boulhosa (2005: 6–21); Cormack (2001); Jørgensen (1995); Louis-Jensen (1997).

⁵⁶ Danielsson (2002b: 349–54; 65–7); in this context, cf. also Kolbrún Haraldsdóttir (1998), who argues that *Hkr* was not simply a compilation of earlier sources, but bears the stamp of authorial intention; she does not, however, adduce any evidence proving that Snorri was the author.

⁵⁷ Whaley (1991: 13–19).

there is sufficient correspondence between *Hkr* and the *Separate saga* to assume that both were composed by a single author.

Hkr is thought to have been composed in the years between 1225 and 1235; the intended audience of this work is a matter of speculation, though it is conceivable that it was intended for Hákon Hákonarson. *Hkr*, like the *HN*, but unlike all the other histories, goes back to a mythical pre-history, presenting a euhemerised version of Norse mythology in which the gods are said to be men of Asian origin who move to the north and become kings (the content of this origin narrative corresponds roughly to that given, in more extended form, in the prologue to *Snorra Edda*); this race of kings is called the Ynglingar, and Haraldr hárfagri Hálfðanarson is said to have originated from this dynasty. The narrative of pre-historic or mythological kings is contained in *Ynglinga saga*, the first part of *Hkr*, and is purportedly based primarily on *Ynglingatal*, a poem that is supposed to date from the reign of Haraldr hárfagri (c.880?–c.930?), and is presented as a part of the prosimetrum of *Ynglinga saga* (the other main verse source for the saga is the poem *Háleygjatal* by the poet Eyvindr skáldaspillir, also known only from *Ynglinga saga*, and thought to date the late tenth century). The narrative of *Hkr* extends to 1177 and the accession of Sverrir, as is the case with the other compendia.

Hkr is much longer and in many ways more detailed than either of the two other compendia, which the author clearly knew; nevertheless, it is characterised not by including everything contained elsewhere and more, but by a very perceptible authorial control and selection, and many verses and narratives given by the other compendia are elided in *Hkr*. For this reason, it is a work that has over the years generally been deemed of the highest literary quality of all the kings' sagas, and has also received more attention from a literary, interpretative perspective. Like the other compendia, *Hkr* includes plenty of verse, though in this work, after *Ynglingatal*, almost all the verse is in the *dróttkvætt* stanza, which is the most complex and formal of the metres employed in skaldic verse (see below); the author is also clearly more discriminating than the *Fsk*-author, fitting his verse more carefully into the prose, and omitting many verses included in *Fsk*. There is manifestly an effort to give the sagas of the individual kings a greater sense of narrative coherence than had been attained in the other compendia. Although Snorri Sturluson was certainly an Icelander, if he was the author of *Hkr*, he seems to have omitted the more explicitly Icelandic elements included in *Msk* (such as the *þættir*), and, according to some scholars, presents a largely pro-Norwegian view

of the history of the Norwegian kings (this aspect is discussed further in chapter four).

The names given to all three compendia are not original; *Morkinskinna* (“rotten parchment”) and *Fagrskinna* (“fair parchment”) are so-called because of the physical appearance of the earliest manuscripts, and *Heimskringla* (“circle of the world”) is the name assigned to the text in the sixteenth century and derived from the first two words of *Ynglinga saga*, with no medieval evidence to support such a title for the whole work. Manuscripts of the compendia divide up the sagas of the individual kings, so it is clear that they were intended as compilations of kings’ sagas, each of which was thought to have a distinct identity, though there are often overlaps between the individual sagas. It is generally accepted that the coherence of style and overall ideological tendency within each compendium points to a single author and authorial intent.⁵⁸

Skaldic Verse

Although the sagas were written only in the early thirteenth century, they draw considerably on verse accounts of events that they present as having been composed by poets associated with the kings, who were, therefore, contemporaries and often eyewitnesses. The principal pre-twelfth-century narrative source for Scandinavian history with any claim to being contemporary is therefore skaldic verse. This genre of poetry is notoriously complicated in its language, style and metre; it is often thought that this very complexity guaranteed a stability of content over centuries, and that the verse written down in the thirteenth century thus accurately records verse composed in the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ For discussions of the question of author versus compiler (with regard to *Hkr*), cf. Kolbrún Haraldsdóttir (1998), and Wanner (2008, 26–8); more generally on the issue of saga authorship, see Kári Gíslason (2006), particularly useful for its extensive further references.

⁵⁹ The word ‘skald’ simply means poet, and skalds would have been reciters and composers of both ‘skaldic’ and ‘eddic’ verse (the latter term derives from the title of the so-called *Poetic Edda*); the distinctions are modern and have to do largely with the relative stylistic complexity and lack of narrative content in the former, though the content also tends to vary in that eddic metres tend not to be used for political or panegyric poetry, but rather for what we think of as mythological and heroic narratives. For concise introductions to skaldic verse: Vésteinn Ólason (2006: 27–53); Whaley (2005); Vésteinn provides more of a historical overview, while Whaley’s paper is a better introduction to matters of style. Frank (1985) remains an excellent survey of the main issues; von See (1999: 193–274) presents a more discursive and contentious reading of skaldic verse in the context of European

While skaldic verse can cover any number of diverse subjects, the poems cited in the kings' sagas are, for the most part, panegyrics, with some element of reportage about the immediate past. Some of the verses are also—as is more often the case in the *Íslendingasögur*⁶⁰—embedded within the narrative in such a way that they form a part of the dialogue, or present a response to a particular situation rather than a report that is supposed to corroborate the prose. Skaldic verse was manifestly a prized art form in Scandinavia, and many skalds were, according to later accounts, important figures in the courts of the Scandinavian kings; skalds of the period between c.900 and c.1110 were the subjects of a number of later sagas, which attest to their commemoration as outstanding figures in the Icelandic past. Skaldic verse continued to be cultivated well into the thirteenth century; Snorri Sturluson himself, as well as his nephew Sturla Þórðarson (who wrote a king's saga, *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar*), were accomplished poets, and like Snorri and Sturla, other skalds also appear

literary history. For a broader introduction to Old Norse poetry (including eddic poetry) and its possible functions, see Fidjestøl (1997b; specifically on skaldic verse: 319–20); and more discursively, Gade (2000b), which focuses primarily on skaldic verse. Clunies Ross (2005) provides a thorough history of Old Norse poetry and poetics, again with attention given mainly to skaldic verse; see especially pp. 69–82 on the transmission and citation of verse in the sagas. Frank (1978) is a useful introduction to the style, content and history of skaldic verse that provides a good selection of texts with translations. Fidjestøl (1982) provides a thorough overview of the verse presented in the king's sagas, as well as the difficulties involved in dating and attribution, and the reconstruction of long poems from individual stanzas. For technical studies of metre and style: Frank (1978); Gade (1995); and more briefly, Poole (2005). For the *Poetic Edda*, see further chapter four, n. 56.

⁶⁰ The *Íslendingasögur*, known in English as 'sagas of Icelanders' or 'family sagas', are probably the genre of medieval Icelandic writing best known to non-specialists; they are invariably set in what some scholars refer to as the 'saga age', roughly from the end of the ninth to the early eleventh century, which corresponds to the period in which Iceland was settled, and by the end of which Iceland had converted to Christianity. They are thus historical narratives, just as are the kings' sagas; the historicity of the *Íslendingasögur* has been much disputed, but there seems to be no compelling reason to believe that they contain significantly more or less fact than the kings' sagas dealing with the same period. The *Íslendingasögur* have been the subject of a vast body of international scholarship; only references to a few recent works of use to non-specialists are given here. For introductions to the genre: Sverrir Tómasson (2006: 122–39); Vésteinn Ólason (2005). Vésteinn Ólason (1998) explicitly addresses the issue of the function of the past in these sagas, and to some extent also their relationship to other genres; Andersson (2006) provides a discussion of the literary-historical context of the sagas in relation to other genres. Byock (2001) is a recent example of a history of Iceland based largely on saga accounts; his discussion of the historical value of the sagas (2001: 142–69) presents a view contrary to that argued in the present work with regard to the kings' sagas. For a guide to the older scholarship, see Clover (1985). On the oral background to the sagas (with some, albeit limited, relevance for kings' sagas as well), see Danielsson (2002a), and Gísli Sigurðsson (2004). O'Donoghue (2005) is an important recent work on the use of verse in the sagas.

often to have had a role to play in Norwegian court politics even in the thirteenth century.⁶¹ Little is known, however, about the process of education that poets underwent, whether in the thirteenth century or earlier, or about how older poems were preserved and transmitted to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. But it is evident from the references in the histories of both Theodoricus and Saxo that Icelanders had a reputation abroad as composers of historical poetry,⁶² and the art of verse-making seems to

⁶¹ On the Skaldsagas, cf. Poole (ed. 2001). On skalds and skaldic verse in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, see Guðrún Nordal (2001; esp. 117–95, on the social position of poets; she includes a prosopography of known thirteenth-century skalds), and Wanner (2006; 2008); more generally, on the real or perceived importance of skalds in Icelandic culture, see Grove (2007); Whaley (2001); cf. below, chapter two at nn. 22–33.

⁶² *HARN*: 1, ll. 7–11 (McDougall and McDougall, trans. 1998: 1, ll. 7–13): “Operæ pretium duxi, vir illustrissime, pauca hæc de antiquitate regum Norwagiensium breviter annotare, et prout sagaciter perquirere potuimus ab eis, penes quos horum memoria præcipue vigere creditur, quos nos Islendinga vocamus, qui hæc in suis antiquis carminibus percelebrata recolunt” (“I have thought it a praiseworthy deed, illustrious sir, to note down briefly these few things regarding the ancient history of the Norwegian kings, as we have been able to learn by assiduous inquiry from those—whom we call the Icelanders—amongst whom it is believed that the memory of these things thrives especially, who preserve these deeds as celebrated in their ancient songs”). Theodoricus elsewhere refers to the reputation of the Icelanders as preservers of history, though he appears to be suspicious of the value of their testimony (here specifically with regard to chronology) where it is not corroborated by written sources (*HARN*: 6, ll. 6–14; McDougall and McDougall, trans. 1998: 5, ll. 4–14): “Hunc numerum annorum Domini, investigatum prout diligentissime potuimus ab illis, quos nos vulgato nomine Islendinga vocamus, in hoc loco posuimus: quos constat sine ulla dubitatione præ omnibus aquilonaribus populis in hujusmodi semper et peritiores et curiosiores extitisse. Sed quia valde difficile est in hujusce ad liquidum veritatem comprehendere, maxime ubi nulla opitulatur scriptorum auctoritas, istum numerum nullo modo volumus præjudicare certiori, si reperiri valet” (“We have given this number of years of the Lord here having most diligently inquired about it among those whom we call in the vernacular Icelanders, about whom it is agreed without any doubt that they have always been both more knowledgeable and more inquisitive than all other northern peoples in such matters. But since it is exceedingly difficult to attain the truth about such things, especially where no written authority provides support, we do not wish to hold to this date over a more certain one, if such a date can be found”). Saxo’s testimony about Icelandic poetry is as follows (Friis-Jensen and Zeeberg, eds and trans. 2005: *præf.*i.4; Ellis Davidson and Fisher, trans. 1979–80: 3): “Nec Tylensium industria silentio obliitteranda. Qui cum ob nativam soli sterilitatem luxurię nutrimentis carentes officia continę sobrietatis exerceant omniaque vitę momenta ad excolendam alienorum operum notitiam conferre soleant, inopiam ingenio pensant. Cunctarum quippe nationum res gestas cognosse memorięque mandare uoluptatis loco reputant, non minoris glorię iudicantes alienas uirtutes disserere quam proprias exhibere. Quorum thesauros historicarum rerum pignoribus refertos curiosus consulens haut parum præsentis operis partem ex eorum relationis imitatione contexui. Nec arbitros habere contempsimus, quos tanta uetustatis peritia callere cognoui” (“Nor should the zeal of the Icelanders be forgotten in silence. Lacking luxury in nourishment due to the innate sterility of their land, they exercise the virtues of continuous sobriety and are accustomed to devote their whole life to cultivating the memory of the deeds of foreigners; they compensate for their lack by their talent. As a form of pleasure, they are

have been a significant source of prestige and income for many Icelanders in other parts of Scandinavia.

Although generally studied as an independent artefact, skaldic verse is always embedded within the prose context of the kings' sagas, which postdates the poetry by as much as three hundred years, at least in its current written form (the problems involved with the relative dates and reliability of verse and prose are discussed in some detail in the following chapter).⁶³ Because of its date, the prose cannot really have much claim to act as a check on the reliability of the verse, and the latter's historical accuracy can only be verified by comparing it with extant contemporary records; until around 1100, these exist almost exclusively for those verses dealing with Anglo-Saxon England and Byzantium. There are almost no other written sources for Scandinavian history, or for the history of the Scandinavians abroad.⁶⁴ The bulk of the contemporary (and in every case non-Scandinavian) evidence for Francia and its relations with Scandinavia and Scandinavians comes from before c.900, for which period there is a

said to have known and committed to memory the deeds of all nations, judging it to be of no less glory to treat of foreign virtues than to exhibit their own. Carefully consulting the treasures recorded as proofs of historical affairs, I have composed merely a meagre measure of the present work in imitation of their narratives. Nor did I disdain to accept as sources those whom I knew to be well-versed in such knowledge of antiquity"). Both Saxo and Theodoricus might have drawn, directly or indirectly, on the passage in Tacitus's *Germania* that tells us with regard to the inhabitants of Germania that songs are "apud illos memoriae et annalium genus" (Ogilvie and Winterbottom, eds 1975, II,2: "the type of commemoration and annals [used] among them"), but given that a large amount of such verse is actually extant, it seems most likely—regardless of how authentically ancient any of the surviving poems are—that such a poetic tradition was indeed cultivated in Iceland, and was known in some way to both Saxo and Theodoricus.

⁶³ For an introduction to Old Norse prosimetrum: Harris (1997). My discussion below of the interaction of verse and prose in the kings' sagas is especially indebted to Poole (1991), and O'Donoghue (2005: 10–77); see also the earlier work of Fidjestøl (1982) on the difficulties regarding the placement and attribution of verses and the variants therein. For the broader context of prosimetrum in European letters: Dronke (1992); and with particular reference to historical literatures in Latin (including Saxo Grammaticus), Pabst (1994: 601–1048); the latter work is an invaluable guide to the history of Latin prosimetrum in medieval Europe.

⁶⁴ Cf. Jesch (2004b), for a recent effort to examine the historical evidence for viking activity on the continent in the late tenth and eleventh centuries. This paper illustrates the difficulty in verifying the information of skaldic verse when other contemporary accounts are lacking: for the most part, Jesch finds that it is not even possible to locate securely the places named in the verse, and little other information can be gleaned from the poetry beyond what is given in the saga prose accompanying it. On Anglo-Saxon attitudes to vikings, see Page (1987a); Zettel (1977). Byzantine sources present less detail of interest to the scholar of Scandinavian history, and for the most part cannot be compared with Norse sources; for a critical discussion of the Byzantine sources on Scandinavians: Obolensky (1970).

dearth of skaldic verse;⁶⁵ little of the extant poetry for the later period deals with journeys to Francia.⁶⁶ Scandinavian traders, warriors and settlers had a fundamental role in the history of early Rus, but unfortunately there is again little in the way of reliable contemporary evidence regarding their activities, or how these impacted the history of Scandinavia. The only contemporary Russian chronicle is the so-called Nestorian or Primary Chronicle of 1116 (*Povest' vremennykh let*), which appears unfortunately to be of somewhat dubious historical value regarding Scandinavians in Russia for the early eleventh century and before.⁶⁷

Given the state of the surviving source material, it is apparent that the extant narratives, however late they might be, must be carefully and critically scrutinised for their value for Scandinavian history before c.1100; fur-

⁶⁵ On Carolingian literary responses to the vikings: Andersson (1975); on the historical interactions between the vikings and Carolingian Francia, cf. e.g. Coupland (1998); Lund (1989), who show how similar viking warfare and plunder was to the methods used by the Carolingians themselves, and how the vikings were integrated into the economic and political systems of the Carolingians.

⁶⁶ On post-Carolingian perceptions of the vikings: Dumville (2003); Foerster (2009: 22–78; on Frankish, Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman histories); Fraesdorff (2005) (on Rimbert's late-ninth-century *Vita Anskari* (Schmiedler and Trillmich, eds and trans. 1968b); Adam of Bremen; Thietmar of Merseburg's *Chronicon* (early eleventh century; Trillmich, ed. and trans. 1957); and Helmold of Bosau's *Chronica Slavorum* (c.1167; Stoob, ed. and trans. 2002)); Zettel (1977). Fraesdorff provides a careful examination of how his texts depict religious, cultural, political and ethnic difference, against a backdrop of inherited classical and early medieval perceptions of the north and the ideology of Christian missionising. Zettel presents a detailed and painstaking study that surveys east and west Frankish and Anglo-Saxon narratives up to the end of the eleventh century, examining the physical, social, religious, political and military aspects of the Normans in these sources, as well as giving a brief analysis of the effects of their incursions into continental Europe and England; though now somewhat outdated, this work remains an essential starting point for these topics.

⁶⁷ The controversies surrounding this work are reviewed by Birgit Scholz (2000: 17–55); on the possibility of oral sources, cf. Melnikova (1996: 93–112). For a thorough discussion of the Scandinavian involvement in early Russian history, see the excellent study of Franklin and Shepard (1996); for an account based primarily on archaeology, cf. the more controversial work of Duczko (2004); cf. also Melnikova (1996). For Norse-centred studies of the vikings in the east, see Ellis Davidson (1976), and for the Varangians in Byzantium, see Sigfús Blöndal and Benedikt Benedikz (1978). Specifically on Haraldr harðráði Sigurðarson's career there: Bagge (1990). Ellis Davidson's work is less rigorously historical than that of Sigfús Blöndal and Benedikt Benedikz, including much that is taken from the *Íslendingasögur* without sufficient critical reflection about its historical value, but the author provides a useful survey of the Russian, Greek and Arabic sources, and some attention to cultural history as well. The role of Scandinavians in Russia and eastern Europe is a much more intractable problem than their settlement in England in around the same period, which is relatively well-documented in contemporary sources: see Hadley (2006), and Hunter Blair (2003: 55–115; 166–72), for surveys, and Whitelock (ed. and trans. 1979; esp. 310–53; 437–9; 452–78) for selected translated sources; on the linguistic contacts and their implications, see Townend (2002b).

thermore, even if we do not take the sagas and poems as representing the ‘facts’, we would need to consider the extent to which they reflect some sort of more broadly defined cultural survivals and may be used as windows into the cultural history of Scandinavia before the twelfth century. Few scholars today would look at saga prose as a reliable historical source for events before the twelfth century, but the poems of the skalds are still often seen as being, at the very least, “the indispensable source” as “guides to the mentality of the most important Nordic group, the military retainers, in the period 950–1050”,⁶⁸ and modern narratives of Scandinavian history remain heavily dependent on the framework, and often even on details, provided by the prosimetrum of the kings’ sagas.

The following chapter provides a critical review of the scholarship on the verse and prose of the kings’ sagas, with readings of some of the more important primary sources; it is hoped that this will not only be a useful point of reference for specialists, but will also contribute to the broader study of medieval European (as opposed to solely Icelandic or Scandinavian) concepts of source reliability, authenticity, and the means of accessing the distant past. Not only with regard to these questions, but also in terms of the function of the past, the kings’ sagas can and should be interrogated with regard to their relationship to other histories, not just those which deal with Scandinavia, but more broadly, the burgeoning European historiography of the central middle ages; these issues—the relationship with and influence of non-Scandinavian traditions, and the function of the past in Norway and Iceland—are the subject of chapters three and four. It is possible that studying Scandinavian historiography in conjunction with the historical traditions of other parts of Europe could prove beneficial both for Scandinavianists and those concerned with other regions. It is hoped that apart from providing an overview of the current state of scholarship, the present work will also provoke further research along the many avenues suggested in the following pages, which incorporate and support some views that will doubtless be controversial; and it will be all the better if any ensuing debate sharpens or conclusively lays to rest some of the arguments set forth here.

⁶⁸ Christiansen (2006a: 309).

CHAPTER TWO

SKALDIC VERSE AND SAGA PROSE: TRANSMISSION AND RELIABILITY

The Authenticity of Skaldic Verse

The earliest period dealt with by any of the kings' sagas concerns the first kings of Sweden and Norway and the unification of Norway; the most extensive prose narrative of these events is given in *Hkr* in *Ynglinga saga*, ostensibly based on *Ynglingatal* and for the latest period it deals with, on *Háleygjatal*;¹ a shorter, but similar, account is in the *HN*. *Ynglingatal* and *Ynglinga saga* are not thought by any modern historians to represent actual events in any detail, and are generally considered to be mythological narratives; but the broader picture of the different ages of Norwegian history (in which kings were cremated; buried in mounds; and given Christian burials) might be thought to be reflected in some manner in these works. More importantly, analysing how these texts function might be a means of understanding how *Hkr* approaches the questions of authenticity and historicity.

The events of *Ynglinga saga* take place in a period for which there are no contemporary narrative sources; the only external checks are provided by archaeology. Alexandra Pesch's study of the archaeological evidence relating to funeral customs, churches and the foundations of cities, shows clearly that archaeology provides nothing to support the narrative of *Ynglinga saga*, and there are in fact some indications that its narrative is contradicted by the archaeological record (we should, however, be cautious of being too credulous with regard to archaeology as well).²

In a more thorough analysis, Claus Krag has examined *Ynglinga saga* and *Ynglingatal*, comparing them to the other texts (principally *HN*) that cover the same period.³ He finds that while there is little external evidence of any kind to support these narratives, all the extant texts appear to be fairly similar, though there are some variations in detail. That being said,

¹ On *Háleygjatal* (not discussed in any detail in the present work), see Goeres (2010): 63–91 (I regret that this important dissertation was completed too late for me to do it justice in the present work); Poole (2007b).

² Pesch (1996).

³ Krag (1991).

Krag finds that the verse and prose of *Ynglinga saga* and *Ynglingatal* do not always match. The author of *Hkr*, it seems clear, either had access to an explanatory prose tradition for *Ynglingatal* that was not contemporary to the poem (assuming that the poem predated the saga by about three centuries, as claimed in *Hkr*), or he found his own ways of explaining the verses—not always very satisfactorily.⁴ Two examples, on Vísburr and Dómalði, will suffice to illustrate the point. Chapter fourteen of *Ynglinga saga* tells us about Vísburr's death at the hand of his eldest sons:⁵

Vísburr tók arf eptir Vanlanda, fǫður sinn. Hann gekk at eiga dóttur Auða ins auðga ok gaf henni at mundi þrjá stórbœi ok gullmen. Þau áttu tvá sonu, Gísl ok Qndur. En Vísburr lét hana eina ok fekk annarrar konu, en hon fór til fǫður sins með sonu sína. Vísburr átti son, er Dómalði hét. Stjúpmóðir Dómalda lét síða at honum ógæfu. En er synir Vísburs váru tólf vetra ok þrettán, fóru þeir á fund hans ok heimtu mund móður sinnar, en hann vildi eigi gjalda. Þá mæltu þeir, at gullmenit skyldi verða at bana inum bezta manni í ætt hans, ok fóru í brot ok heim. Þá var enn fengit at seið ok siðit til þess, at þeir skyldi mega drepa fǫður sinn. Þá sagði Hulð vólva þeim, at hon myndi svá síða ok þat með, at ættvíg skyldi ávallt vera í ætt þeira Ynglinga síðan. Þeir játtu því. Eptir þat sǫmnudu þeir liði ok kómu at Vísbur um nótt á óvart ok brenndu hann inni. Svá segir Þjóðólfr:

Ok Vísburs
vilja byrgi
sævar niðr
svelga knátti,
þás meinþjóf
markar ǫttu
setrs verjendr
á sinn fǫður,
ok allvald
í arinkjóli
glóða garmr
glymjandi beit.⁶

⁴ Krag (1991: 99–143); cf. also Lönnroth (1986).

⁵ On this narrative, cf. Krag (1991: 103–6).

⁶ “Vísbur came into the inheritance of Vanlandi, his father. He went to marry the daughter of Auði the Rich, and gave as her dowry three great estates and a golden necklace. They had two sons, Gísl and Qndurr. But Vísbur left her and took another wife, and she went to her father with her sons. Vísbur had a son who was called Dómalði. Dómalði's stepmother worked charms to his misfortune. And when Vísbur's sons [sc. Gísl and Qndur] were twelve and thirteen years old, they went to meet him [sc. Vísbur] and claimed their mother's dowry, but he did not want to give it to them. Then they said that the golden necklace would be the bane of the best man of his lineage, and went away back to their home. Then more wizardry was performed, to the effect that they would be able to

It is immediately apparent that the verse has far less information to impart than the prose: *Ynglingatal* only tells us that Vísburr's sons burnt him indoors, providing none of the background context, the sons' motivation, the curse on the remaining generations of Ynglings, and so on. The *HN* also gives us more than is contained in *Ynglingatal*, but expands in a manner somewhat different from *Hkr*: "Hic genuit Wisbur, quem filii sui cum omni curia sua, ut cicius hereditarentur, uiuum incenderunt".⁷ The addition of the court and the motivation for the killing both diverge from *Hkr*. The story of Vísburr is thus a clear example of prose narratives providing more than is contained in the verse, in the case of *Hkr* considerably more than could even reasonably be inferred from the verse (it seems more plausible that the account of the *HN* could derive from such a verse, since the motivation is a logical one, and the retainers would probably have been in the same hall as the king).

The story of Dómaldi is somewhat more controversial, not least because the verse itself is harder to interpret. The *HN* tells us that Dómaldi was sacrificed for the sake of a harvest: "Cuius filium Domald Sweones suspendentes pro fertilitate frugum Cereri hostiam obtulerunt".⁸ *Hkr*'s narrative is as follows:⁹

Dómaldi tók arf eptir föður sinn, Vísburr, ok réð lönðum. Á hans dögum gerðisk í Svíþjóð sultr ok seyra. Þá efldu Svíar blót at Uppsölum. It fyrsta haust blótudu þeir yxnum, ok batnaði ekki árferð at heldr. En annat haust hófu þeir mannblót, en árferð var sgm eða verri. En it þridja haust kómu Svíar fjölmennt til Uppsala, þá er blót skyldu vera. Þá áttu hqfðingjar ráðagørð sína, ok kom þat ásamt með þeim, at hallærit myndi standa af Dómalda, konungi þeira, ok þat með, at þeir skyldi honum blóta til árs sér ok veita honum atgöngu ok drepa hann ok rjóða stalla með blóði hans, ok svá gerðu þeir. Svá segir Þjóðólfr:

kill their father. Then the seeress Hulð said to them that she would work such a charm, but as a result, the slaying of kinsmen would always take place in the lineage of the Ynglings henceforth. They agreed to this. After this, they collected an army and came upon Vísburr unawares at night and burnt him inside [his home/hall]. Thus says Þjóðólfr: And the son of the sea [= fire] was able to swallow Vísburr's fence of the will [= body] when the [royal] seat's defendants [sc. kings] incited the harmful thief of the forest [= fire] against their father, and the dog of the embers [= fire] noisily bit the governing one [= king] in [his] ship of the hearth [= home]" (*Hkr* I: 30–1, v. 7; *HkrH*: 17–18).

⁷ "He [sc. Vanlandi] begat Vísburr; Vísburr's own sons burnt him alive along with his whole court, in order that they might inherit [the kingdom] sooner" (*HN*: IX,9).

⁸ "Whose [sc. Vísburr's] son Dómaldi the Swedes hanged, offering him as a sacrifice to Ceres [the Roman goddess of agriculture] for the fertility of the harvest" (*HN*: IX,10).

⁹ On the Dómaldi passages, cf. Christiansen (2006a: 137); Krag (1991: 132–4); Lönnroth (1986).

Hitt vas fyrr,
 at fold ruðu
 sverðberendr
 sínum dróttni,
 ok landherr
 af lífs vǫnum
 dreyrug vǫpn
 Dómalda bar,
 þás árgjörn
 Jóta dolgi
 Svía kind
 of sóa skyldi.¹⁰

Hkr accords with the *HN* in saying that Dómaldi was sacrificed for the sake of the fertility of the crops, though it diverges from the Latin text in that the latter has Dómaldi hung; *Hkr* also has, as is always the case, far more detail. But can this account really be corroborated by the verse? It is clear from the verse that Dómaldi is killed and his blood reddens the earth; it is also the case in the verse that the Swedes killed Dómaldi. But there is no mention of sacrifice, of reddening the altar, of an assembly at Uppsala, or even of a bad harvest. The word that could indicate some connection with the harvest is ‘árgjörn’, is only attested here. It could certainly mean eager (‘gjarn’) for fruitfulness/fertility = harvest (‘ár’). But ‘ár’ also means early; ‘prematurely-eager’ might be understood as a poetic collocation for ‘over-eager’ or ‘ambitious’, and there is no necessity to read a harvest into the word (though that might be a simpler reading). Even more importantly, ‘árgjörn’ (metrically equally suitable) is a well-attested word, meaning ‘ambitious’, ‘aggressive’ or ‘covetous’; if one were to emend the text from ‘árgjörn’ to ‘ággjörn’, it would make perfect sense as telling us about a revolting army, ambitious, seeking more power and therefore killing the

¹⁰ “Dómaldi came into the inheritance after his father, Vísburr, and ruled the lands. In his days there was hunger and famine in Sweden. Then the Swedes performed a great sacrifice at Uppsala. In the first harvest season, they sacrificed oxen, and the harvest did not improve at all. And in the second season they performed a human sacrifice, but the harvest was as bad or worse. And in the third season a multitude of the Swedes assembled at Uppsala, where the sacrifice was to take place. There the chieftains made their plan, and they agreed that the bad season was caused by Dómaldi, their king, and that they should therefore sacrifice him for their harvest and attack him and kill him and redden the altar with his blood, and they did this. Thus says Þjóðólfr: Thus it happened once that the sword-bearing ones reddened the earth with their lord, and the land’s host took the bloody weapons from the dead Dómaldi, when the harvest-eager / prematurely-eager [= “árgjörn”] kin of the Swedes had to put to sleep the enemy of the Jutes [= Dómaldi]” (*Hkr* I: 31–2, v. 8; *HkrH*: 18–19).

king.¹¹ Speaking of emendation takes us into muddy waters indeed; but is it not possible that the received text itself depends on a tradition that tells of sacrifice, even if the original verse had no such connotation? There are no early manuscripts of *Ynglingatal*, and it has been conclusively demonstrated with the examples of other, far more complex skaldic poems, that thirteenth-century scribes and editors could and did alter their texts (see below for discussion). Is it not possible that the otherwise unattested 'árgjarn' is a reading of the poem intended to make the verse better accord with a later prose tradition that accreted around an earlier poem? In any case, even if we retain the meaning of 'harvest-eager', does this necessarily imply a sacrifice? The word 'ár' could mean 'crops'; the verse might be a report of a rebellion against an excessively harsh extraction of surplus produce by the king. These suggestions are, of course, no more than that; I make them not intending to fix a single meaning to the poem, but to illustrate that it would easily be possible, were it not for the prose context, to interpret the verse differently, and that the prose therefore provides us with far more than is in the verse, and does not necessarily read the verse correctly.

We have, therefore, in the examples provided above, prose accounts that cite verses, apparently as a means of authentication, but that actually tell us more than can justifiably be extracted from the verse. The differences between verse and prose are rarely very grave: the main divergences between verse and prose are not so much necessarily matters of disagreement, but arise from the prose providing rather more information than the verse; the prose must thus stand as an independent source. Krag believes that all the prose accounts covering this period probably draw on the same

¹¹ The *Ordbog over det norrøne prosasprog* (*Dictionary of Old Norse Prose*) lists five other adjectival instances of 'ár'-as a prefix indicating fertility or a good season ('árbýll'; 'árgallalauss'; 'árligr'; 'ársamligr'; 'ársamr'; 'ársæll'; 'árvænigr'; 'árvænn'), and four adjectival instances (including two participial adjectives) of 'ár-' as a prefix indicating ('árbúinn'; 'árr'; 'árrisull'; 'árvakr'), to which should be added the adverbial usages of the prefix in the latter sense ('árdegis'; 'árla'); there are no adverbial uses listed of 'ár-' in the former sense. In addition, Cleasby-Vigfússon provides three words known only in poetry, in both of which the prefix is used to indicate 'early': 'árliga' (this exists in prose with the meaning of 'annually', but in poetry is used for 'early'); 'ársáinn'; 'ármorginn'. In contrast, 'á-' is extremely well-attested in poetry and prose alike as an intensifying prefix for adverbs and adjectives. This is not, of course, much of an argument in itself, but it cannot be overlooked that both the intensifying prefix 'á-' and the compound 'árgjarn' are far better attested than either 'ár-' or the hapax legomenon 'árgjarn'. We should note also that 'árgjarn' is used in *Nóregs konungatal* (st. 6) precisely to mean aggressive, with regard to Haraldr hárfagri's wars against Norwegian magnates (Gade, ed. and trans. 2009: 765–6).

tradition—but not, in his view, on *Ynglingatal*.¹² While there may well have been some historical events that had some rough correspondence to the information given in *Ynglingatal* and the prose narratives, according to Krag, the extant stories (verse and prose) that were available in the twelfth century related to history in the same manner that heroic poetry does (he compares the verse and prose of *Ynglingatal* with eddic verse and the *fornaldarsögur*, as well as Saxo's prosimetrum); historical events were transformed into legendary traditions, with relatively little relation to actual fact, and containing the inconsistencies common in all such traditions.¹³ In the twelfth century and beyond, historian-scholars such as Ari and the *Hkr*-author used this legendary matter to compile their histories, altering it in whatever ways were necessary to make the narrative cohere. There was, in other words, no original (and historical) poem dating from the time of the Ynglingar, and no accompanying explanatory prose, accessible more or less unchanged to twelfth-century writers. The historical Norwegian kings of the eleventh and twelfth centuries were unlikely really to have descended even from Haraldr hárfagri, and this genealogical link is more likely an effort at retrospective legitimation than historical fact.

It is important to stress that Krag does not doubt the intentions of any of the twelfth- and thirteenth-century authors he examines, nor that they or their own immediate sources believed in the truth and antiquity of their narratives. Rather, he finds that none of this material has any worth as a source for the early period of Norwegian history, and does not reach back in time to the period of which it tells. Krag's refutation of an early date for *Ynglingatal* has not been very well-received, and there is little enough evidence for any alternate date in the twelfth century, as Krag proposes.¹⁴ We should note also that the very misunderstandings of the verse in *Hkr* that Krag draws attention to might speak more for an early rather than a late date of the poem.¹⁵ The arguments against Krag, however, are based largely on using metrical and linguistic criteria—concerning features that are all present in comprehensible form in late manuscripts—to assign an early date to the poem, and depend therefore on the assumption that

¹² Krag (1991: 143–72).

¹³ Krag (1991: 211–39). On the issues concerning the transformation of history into legend see also Ghosh (2007), with further references.

¹⁴ For reactions to Krag's monograph, see e.g. Andersson (1992); Sapp (2000); Sundqvist (2005: 90–3); Whaley (1993d); and more generally on the issues involved: Goeres (2010: 17–22).

¹⁵ Andersson (1992: 488); Sundqvist (2005: 93).

although later scribes or poets might have been able to memorise and transmit the poem, both orally and in writing, they would not have been able, or likely, to have composed such a work. These objections are, therefore, open to all the weaknesses involved in dating skaldic verse generally (on which see further below). It seems possible that the poem, although perhaps altered over the course of time, does nevertheless contain some ancient (or at the very least pre-twelfth-century) elements. But even if *Ynglingatal* itself is a genuinely old poem,¹⁶ Krag's cautions regarding its value as a historical source must be kept in mind: age does not guarantee historical accuracy; there is no way in which we can verify what the poem reports; the poem does not always concord with the prose accounts, and often tells us much less than the prose, which is in itself a cause for suspicion regarding at least the prose; and archaeological evidence does not confirm, and sometimes might contradict, what the verse says.¹⁷

The period in which *Ynglingatal* is set may well be viewed as a sort of mythic pre-history, with the narratives relating to that time having only a quasi-historical value, and in any case, even *Hkr* does not claim that the poem is truly contemporary: it is supposed to have been composed by a poet in the time of Haraldr hárfagri, and is thus already, even in *Hkr*'s

¹⁶ Note Sapp's conclusion, based on metrical analysis, that the poem cannot be of the twelfth century, but could certainly be from the end of the tenth century; this is already too late for it to be reliable as a historical source (2000). See, however, the recent interpretation of the poem by Erin Michelle Goeres, who takes it as an early historical document of use not for relating events, but as evidence of particular cultural practices, which may be differentiated somewhat from the uses to which poetry is put in later periods, in particular after the conversion (2010: 17–63).

¹⁷ For similarly sceptical view of the historical content of a single verse (v. 8) of *Ynglingatal*, and further analysis of differences between prose and verse, cf. Lönnroth (1986); he concludes, like Krag, that there is no historical value to the poem or the prose. Lönnroth suggests further that the poem as a whole was perhaps not even intended as a historical work, but might rather have been composed as a polemic against the Swedes; this does not, however, detract from the fact that in its context in *Ynglinga saga*, it is clearly presented as a source for what is supposed to be understood as a historical narrative. For a recent positive reading of the historical content of *Ynglingatal* (viewed separately from *Ynglinga saga*, cf. Sundqvist 2005). One of the main issues of controversy in *Ynglingatal* is the matter of sacral kingship; the debate concerns whether or not ancient Scandinavian kings were considered to be of divine origin, and whether or not they had any priestly functions. The discussion is not especially pertinent to my arguments, and concerns a very different source base; for an overview of the debates, see McTurk (1974), and McTurk (1994: 25–7 for a discussion of Krag 1991); more recently, cf. Beck (2005) and Wolf (2005). For a thorough exposition of a sceptical position, see Picard (1991), and Christiansen (2006a: 135–41), for a rather brusque dismissal of the concept; for affirmative views, cf. Steinsland (1991; 2000); and with reference particularly to *Ynglingatal*, Sundqvist (2005). For a more broad-ranging critique of modern ideas of a 'Germanic' concept of holiness, see also von See (1999: 109–27).

presentation, retrospective in nature, with the narratives of *Vísburrr* and *Dómaldr* lying several generations in the past. But Krag's critique is perhaps less important for the way it undermines the reliability of *Ynglingatal* and *Ynglinga saga* as bearers of fact than because it exposes the possibility of discrepancies between prose and verse, cautioning us that the verse might not be reliable, and that the prosimetrum of the sagas might be of dubious value since the prose, while presenting the verse as a source, actually provides diverging information.

While the events of the ninth century and earlier are commemorated only in the traditions related to *Ynglingatal* and *Ynglinga saga*, by the first half of the eleventh century, there is a far richer fund of more independent source material, both native Scandinavian and external, much of it contemporary, and it might therefore be supposed that the sources for this later period, which are claimed as having been composed contemporaneously with the events, accord better with historical fact. In an elegant paper published over two decades ago, Russell Poole was able to show convincingly that while the broader historical picture (for example, the outcome or magnitude of battles) presented by the verse set in England in the first decades of the eleventh century need not necessarily be reliable, the poems generally agree with the overall context provided by independent contemporary sources, and can in some cases provide extra details, which could be regarded as trustworthy.¹⁸ The poems can fill in the information provided by the contemporary *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (ASC; at least some manuscripts of this source were written in the mid-eleventh century and can thus be counted as contemporary) by providing place-names as battle sites, and in some cases perhaps by indicating that some battles, not recorded elsewhere, did take place—where the event is supported by the pattern of viking/Anglo-Saxon conflict discernible from the ASC.¹⁹ However, Poole also cautions that skaldic verse is not immune

¹⁸ Poole (1987). For a broader and more sceptical examination of historical material on Anglo-Saxon England in Norse sources, cf. Magnús Fjalldal (2005, esp. chapters 4 and 5); for the most part, he deliberately excludes poetry from the compass of his study. Most recently, see Ólav Tveito's examination of the narratives regarding Óláfr helgi Haraldsson and his relations with Knútr and Æthelred (2008); although he examines little verse, he appears to believe in its trustworthiness, and furthermore affirms that *Hkr's* interpretation of *Sigvatr's Vestrfararvísur* is accurate with regard to Óláfr's movements and lack of alliance with Knútr, *contra* the testimony of *Ólhelg*.

¹⁹ Some examples: Poole argues that when Þórðr Kolbeinsson mentions a battle between vikings and the English at *Hringmaraheiðr*, although no contemporary English source mentions such a battle, it would fit within the context of what is known from contemporary works about viking/English wars in the period, and is thus probably authentic (Poole 1987: 277–80, with reference to *Knytinga saga* (Bjarni Guðnason, ed. 1982a: 118, v.

to mutation, not always historically accurate, and that the context and order of extant verses need not be 'original'. Sigvatr's *Víkingarvísur* are a rare instance in which stanzas are, so to speak, numbered (though since Sigvatr was himself absent at the events he narrates, the value of his work is uncertain, and the different sagas do not include all verses, or arrange them in the same order),²⁰ and in many other cases, it would be possible to rearrange the stanzas without creating much noticeable damage to the comprehensibility of the poem as a whole.

Apart from England, there are some contemporary sources that can be compared with skaldic verse relating to events in eastern Europe and the middle east; Sigfús Blöndal and Benedikt Benedikz find that in some cases, the Norse sources present reliable evidence regarding Russia and the Holy Land, but since most of the poems were composed many years after the events they record, they do not have a claim to being contemporary, as do some of the poems regarding England. Nevertheless, even in this theatre the verse might occasionally add some reliable information to our knowledge of events, but we cannot rely on the verse unless there are external checks as well.²¹ Given that even some of the verses

19; Hermann Pálsson and Edwards, trans. 1986: 38)); in v. 8 of the *Liðsmannaflakkr*, all of which is cited in *Ólhelg*: 48–53, vv. 2–11, there appears to be a reference to the presence of Queen Emma in London, not directly corroborated by contemporary English sources, but, according to Poole, possibly fitting the context of her movements as we know them (Poole 1987: 290–2; see also Poole 1991: 86–115, for further analysis of the poem); the same verse appears to allude to the Welsh providing assistance to the English, which is again not attested explicitly in contemporary sources, but seems to fit the context as we know it (Poole 1987: 292–8). It should be noted that on occasion Poole also refers to later Anglo-Norman sources; as we shall see in chapter three, there was much interaction across the North Sea world, and it is possible that the Anglo-Norman sources were themselves influenced by, or influenced, Norse accounts. For a survey of the information given by the prose accounts of much the same events narrated in the verse Poole examines, see Magnús Fjalldal (2005: 39–51). Although excluded from detailed consideration in the present work because of their focus on Danish material, Matthew Townend's studies on skaldic verse-making in England, particularly in relation to the reign of Knútr (2000; 2001; 2002a; 2005), should be mentioned as insightful attempts at locating the historical context of skaldic verse, which, like Poole's work, expose both the pitfalls of trying to extract historical information from these poems, as well as suggesting how much one can reasonably glean from them.

²⁰ Cf. Fell (1981, with an edition of the whole poem), and O'Donoghue (2005: 46–55), for further commentary and context regarding this poem, with critique of how the prose sources utilise the verse. The poem is in *Hkr* II: vv. 4, 6–9, 12–13, 16–17, 19–22, 24, and 33; *Fsk*: vv. 124, 126–7; and *Ólhelg*: 46, v. 1. The very different use of the verse in these sagas is itself a cause for some caution!

²¹ Sigfús Blöndal and Benedikt Benedikz (1978); it is unfortunate that since Sigfús, few scholars have had the inclination or linguistic expertise to compare Greek, Russian and Norse historiography: there remains much work to be done in this area.

regarding Anglo-Saxon England are not necessarily accurate, we must ask whether we can trust verses for which there are no external contemporary records (almost inevitably the case for internal Scandinavian history): should we presume that the roughly reliable nature of the poetry composed about Anglo-Saxon England applies also to the poems composed about Scandinavian affairs? (Note that the vast majority of poems fall into the latter category). We should recall that even for Anglo-Saxon England, Poole's analysis shows that the poems display (not surprisingly) a substantial bias in favour of the Scandinavians fighting in England; it would hardly be unexpected for the poems about events in Scandinavia to be similarly favourable to the patrons of the poets, which further calls into question their reliability.

Perhaps complete scepticism is the only option when faced with (apparently contemporary) verse narratives explained solely by later prose and not corroborated or supported, even in terms of broad background context (as is the case with some of the Anglo-Saxon material), in any contemporary sources. Nevertheless, the verse, in isolation from the prose, might still be an authentic witness at least to the values of the society around the early Scandinavian rulers. Edith Marold, in two stimulating articles, has studied the content of skaldic poetry not with regard to its narration of events, but rather as a clue to the relations between court and poet, and to the mentality of the society for which it was composed.²² Her 1994 study of the social and political role of the skalds concludes that the skalds were key figures in the Norwegian court. While this is entirely possible—even likely, given that skalds are often said to have fulfilled other, non-poetic functions—we should note that the poetry (divorced from the prose) gives us very little information indeed by which we may come to any conclusions about performance context and poet–audience relationship, and there is little external evidence to support Marold's view of the pre-eminence of the skalds as figures of knowledge and judges at the court.

Arguing from a different perspective, Kevin Wanner has recently arrived at a conclusion similar to that of Marold, but with regard to the thirteenth century. Wanner believes that Snorri Sturluson was against the intrusion of the Church in Norwegian politics because, as an Icelander, he saw this as competition; according to Wanner the verse of the skalds was as important as the anointing by a bishop as a form of “ritualised expression and

²² Marold (1994) and Marold (1987) respectively.

thus confirmation" of the king's right to rule.²³ Most recently, taking into account both verse and prose evidence from a wide variety of sources, Jonathan Grove's fascinating study of skaldic competitiveness shows how pervasive is the notion in Icelandic literature of the importance of the skalds, though Grove is more cautious than Marold and Wanner regarding the historical veracity of such claims.²⁴

There is no doubt that Scandinavian courts, like the establishments of rulers elsewhere, did indeed value those parts of their retinue that could function as suitably prestigious ornamentation. To use Wanner's Bourdieu-derived terminology, skaldic verse was a form of 'cultural capital' that had a perceived value in Norway, and could thus bring material benefit to the skalds: Wanner argues that the production of skaldic verse was a form of cultural capital uniquely possessed by Icelanders. As a group, the Icelandic elite was "a social fraction that within its own land was politically, economically, and socially dominant" but "within the larger Scandinavian context, was dominated in all of these measures of power and distinction".²⁵ Given this status, their production and promotion of skaldic verse can be seen as the effort of the Icelanders to counteract, by means of a cultural export, their dominance in all social and material spheres by other Scandinavian aristocracies; as the unique, or especially talented producers of a valued cultural good, they were able to trade it for material benefits at the court of Norway (and others too), and by gaining status and wealth at the courts of the economically and politically dominant elites of Scandinavia, they boosted their status in Iceland.²⁶ While

²³ Wanner (2006: 24 and *passim*). For a more noncommittal view with relation to Sturla Þórðarson's place in the Norwegian court cf. Grove (2007: 386–7); see also Guðrún Nordal (2001: 117–95) for a presentation and discussion of the known Icelandic poets of the thirteenth century, almost exclusively members of the aristocracy. Wanner has argued at length elsewhere (2008) that skaldic verse was a form of 'cultural capital', a term drawn from the works of the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu; put briefly, cultural capital is a particular form of cultural knowledge or production that, when used appropriately where there is demand for it, can confer material benefits (economic well-being, social prestige, political leverage) on those who possess it (this is a vastly simplified summary; see Bourdieu (1986) for his own brief summary of the theory, and Wanner (2008: 8–14) for a more detailed exposition and further references to other relevant works of Bourdieu). The status of skaldic verse as cultural capital in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries is examined in detail with the example of Snorri Sturluson and his *Edda* by Wanner (2008). The implications of his arguments on our understanding of the function of the kings' sagas will be discussed in chapter four.

²⁴ Grove (2007).

²⁵ Wanner (2008: 57).

²⁶ A diagrammatic presentation of this argument is in Wanner (2008: 146, fig. 1), with a similar diagram presenting the newer order, where non-Scandinavian forms of cultural

accepting his presentation of the Icelandic side of the equation, I feel that Wanner considerably overstates both the factual content of the verse, and more importantly, its role in legitimating the reign of a king;²⁷ he ignores the fact that there is no evidence for the value placed by kings on poets (as poets) beyond that produced by Icelanders and skalds, and in fact there is little compelling evidence, even in the extant corpus of Icelandic material, that the reign of a king was legitimated by skaldic verse, and could be in any way threatened by the opprobrium of poets.

We cannot, therefore, really judge the extent of the poets' political or social importance for the Norwegian (or other Scandinavian and English) courts. In other words, it is impossible to ascertain whether, as Marold and Wanner argue, the cultural capital also had any concrete benefits for Norwegian kings (that is, as a form of legitimising their reign), and not just for the poets themselves. As all evidence in this regard can be derived primarily from the verse itself, and from the later prose accounts of skalds' lives and deeds—which were clearly written by Icelanders with an intent to glorify the skalds, and more generally the role of Icelanders in Norwegian and other courts—the historical value of these sources, even solely with regard to the poets' role in society, is at the very least dubious. After all, if the primary product Icelanders had to proffer was poetry, it was in the poet's—and Icelandic's—interest to exaggerate his own worth at the court, and thus such evidence as we have can hardly be taken as unbiased and therefore reliable.²⁸ Regardless of how accurately this reflects the real situation, however, the skalds, as well as the authors of *Msk* and *Hkr*, certainly presented a view of Icelanders (as skalds) that stressed their importance for the Norwegian court; this undoubtedly attests to the fact that it was clearly of social and economic importance for the Icelanders themselves to be recognised at court, to which the main benefit they could bring in exchange appears to have been verse-making.²⁹

production enjoy greater prestige, on the following page (147, fig. 2). For a succinct exposition of the notion of skaldic verse as 'cultural capital', see Wanner (2008: 57–65).

²⁷ Thus also Wanner (2006).

²⁸ On the real or fictional role of the skalds in court and society, see, in addition to the works cited above, the more general studies of Baumann (1986); Clunies Ross (2005: 83–96); Mitchell (2001); Whaley (2001). On the mythological framework apparently given to the role of the poet in medieval Iceland, cf. the opposing views of Frank (1981), and Wanner (2008: 64–5; 136–9). For the broader social and legal background, see e.g. Miller (1990).

²⁹ See e.g. Grove (2007: esp. 63–7, and 147–203; 244–325 on saga depictions of court poets); he discusses the poets of the past. On contemporary (Icelandic) perceptions of the importance of the poets and their craft in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, see Guðrún

Comparisons with other traditions of courtly (especially political) verse would be useful; in Germany, Walther von der Vogelweide is one poet who notoriously rates his own importance at court very highly, but there is little evidence that poets ever did enjoy such a decisive function in the life of the German courts as some might like to believe.³⁰ Similarly, the poets of the so-called Carolingian Renaissance—persons about whom rather more is known from contemporary evidence than about the skalds—also appear to have a very high opinion of their value to the court; in fact, if they were important, it was probably because of other, administrative and religious functions that they fulfilled.³¹ The difference is that in the case of Icelandic skalds, skaldic verse (along with, possibly, other forms of verse containing ancient lore) was the primary marketable good available to Icelanders that was not available to other Scandinavian peoples; or at least, it was a skill for which Icelanders had an extraordinary reputation, which it was therefore naturally in their interest to bolster. Thus while skalds might have had no greater worth than as ornaments in the Scandinavian courts, the prestige that a skald could receive in Iceland by virtue of his function at court was arguably considerable; hence the desire to perpetuate the importance of skalds and their verse. (Note also that in the Icelandic accounts, the skalds invariably had other, normally military, functions in addition to being poets; the value of such pragmatic, non-poetic roles, should not be underestimated, but is not necessarily related in any way to the production of poetry). It is here worth noting Kari Ellen Gade's caveat that "the renewed interest in skaldic poetry and skaldic biographies in early thirteenth-century Iceland could have projected back

Nordal (2001), and Wanner (2008); for a brief overview of the tradition of skaldic verse in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, see Clunies Ross (2005: 206–31).

³⁰ For a reading of one of Walther's poems that, to my mind, greatly exaggerates the importance of the poet at court, see Ortmann and Ragotzky (1990); on Walther more generally, see Bein (1997: 168–243). Ortmann and Ragotzky's reading is of L 42, 31ff., which corresponds to Cormeau (ed. 1996) 19, I–IV. Other genres of verse composition, most notably the love-lyric, have been the subject of some amount of comparative study; Peter Dronke's work (1968) on love-lyric in medieval Europe is the basic point of reference in this context, encompassing both Latin and the various vernacular traditions (including skaldic verse), and arguing for significant cross-fertilisation between the various vernacular poetries and Latin. Unfortunately, political/panegyric verse in medieval Europe does not seem to have attracted significant scholarship of this kind; further comparative work on medieval European political poetry that encompasses skaldic verse is something greatly to be desired.

³¹ On the Carolingian poets, Godman (1987) is the basic work, which to my mind somewhat exaggerates the importance of poets and poetry; cf. Bullough (1991: 123–60); Garrison (1994).

on the images of the poets presented in the family sagas and in the *þættir* of the kings' sagas";³² if we agree with Guðrún Nordal³³ and Wanner that there was an increased interest in promoting skaldic verse in the dying days of the Icelandic commonwealth, and that this was a reaction to a perceived loss of status of such cultural capital in Norway, it is only logical that Icelandic material about poets and kings in the past would exaggerate the importance for the kings of the poets, perhaps far beyond any real status their verse had ever had.

Marold's fascinating analysis of kennings and words used to describe kings attempts to trace a diachronic difference in the conception of kingship provided by the poetry.³⁴ She finds, for instance, that the Swedish Ynglings in *Ynglingatal* receive epithets denoting kingship as well as warrior-qualities, whereas the Norwegian Ynglings are defined primarily as warriors. Haraldr hárfagri Hálfðanarson is the first king to be called "dróttinn Norðmanna" ("lord of the North-men"),³⁵ and Haraldr gráfeldr is the first to be called "Nóregs konungr" ("king of Norway");³⁶ this leads Marold to suggest that there was a gradual development in the idea of personal kingship embodied by the ruler, who is defined now not just by his qualities as a warrior, but also specifically as a ruler of land and people. There are, however, sometimes split images of kings, depending on which poem one looks at: while *Glymdrápa* presents a multitude of epithets about Haraldr hárfagri that, according to Marold, highlight his warrior role (a large number of bellicose kennings, and words such as 'hilmir' ('helmsman'), and 'menfergir' ('necklace-scatterer'; it is not clear why this last term must be associated with a 'warrior' rather than 'king'), and relatively few that call him a king (represented by words like 'konungr' ('king') and 'ríkr' ('mighty' or 'rich')—though why the latter term should connote 'king' more than 'warrior' is not clear to me), he is scarcely present as a warrior in the *Haraldskvæði*.³⁷ It is notable that despite their apparently somewhat diverging perspectives, both poems are attributed to the same

³² Gade (2000: 70).

³³ Guðrún Nordal (2001).

³⁴ Marold (1987).

³⁵ He is called thus in *Fsk*: 61, v. 5 (*FskF*: 44); this verse is attributed to Þorbjörn hornklofi, and is generally agreed to be a part of a longer poem called *Haraldskvæði*. Although some verses from this poem are cited in *Hkr* (see n. 37), this particular verse is not.

³⁶ He is called thus in *Fsk*: 102, v. 66 (*FskF*: 78–9); this verse is attributed to Glúmr Geirason, and is said to be from his *Gráfeldardrápa*. It is not transmitted elsewhere.

³⁷ The poems are cited in *Fsk*: vv. 23–5 (*Glymdrápa*); and vv. 1–15 and 18–22 (*Haraldskvæði*); and *Hkr* I: vv. 33–6, 40, 41, 48 (*Glymdrápa*); vv. 39, 41–6 (*Haraldskvæði*).

poet, Þorbjörn hornklofi. Given that they are thus supposed to have been composed at around the same time by the same person, it seems to me that the differences between poems might indicate less a chronological development than varying perspectives dictated by the needs of particular situations, or by the personalities or patrons of individual poets.

Marold's ideas (which are only very sketchily summarised here) are thought-provoking indeed, but not unproblematic: her categories, while for the most part clearly demarcated from each other, probably reflect modern notions of divisions between concepts of warriors and kings (why should a 'menfergir', for example, not be a king, but only a leader of a retinue, a 'Gefolgsherr', as Marold proposes?), and I am not certain to what extent these categories, or her further distinctions of different semantic fields as markers of cultural values, can really be derived from the poetry itself, nor that they would have been apparent to poets and their audiences. Would terms denoting ruling over land, or generosity, or prowess in battle, necessarily denote either a king or a warrior, but not both? It is also never easy to know when a particular epithet is chosen simply as a *topos*, or when it really signals some kind of semantic change: the choice of wording might have more to do with metre and stylistic factors, and less to do with cultural transformations than Marold concedes. (I address more serious problems, concerning the dating and variability of poems and their relationship to the prose, below; obviously, any notion of a changing conception of kingship is viable only if the poems can be placed in reliable chronological relation to each other). These reservations notwithstanding, there is an empirical difference in terminology used across different poems; examining the vocabulary of skaldic verse, and paying attention to variations in transmission (something Marold does not do) might be a fruitful avenue of further research.

(In this context we should mention also the debate between Rikke Malmros and Niels Lund with regard to the possibility of understanding the structure of Danish military organisation on the basis of skaldic verse; Malmros believes that the poetic corpus provides fairly detailed and reliable information with regard to military, and therefore also social, structures, whereas Lund argues—more convincingly, in my view—that the information provided by the verse is too sparse to allow for any definite conclusions, a position supported by the work of Judith Jesch.)³⁸

³⁸ Jesch (2001: 195–8); similarly also Christiansen (2006a: 108). Malmros's first statement was published in Malmros (1985), with refinements and restatements in debates with Lund

I would suggest, however, that any such research should be combined with an examination of the use of similar terminology in the prose context of the verse; one example will suffice to show that if we bear in mind the differing contexts of the poems, and instead of studying poems in a disembodied form (as it were), examine them in the contexts in which they are actually transmitted, the results of diachronic analyses such as that of Marold would be different. As noted above (n. 35), the stanza of *Haraldskvæði* in which Haraldr hárfagri is called ‘dróttin Norðmanna’ occurs in *Fsk*, but not in *Hkr*—even though the author of the latter probably had access to the former. In the verses cited in *Hkr*, he is called only “allvald[r] Austmanna”.³⁹ In *Hkr*, ‘Nóregr’ occurs once in verse at the end of *Ynglingatal*:

Ok niðkvísl
í Nóregi
þróttar Þrós
of þroazk hafði.⁴⁰

The word ‘Nóregr’ simply provides a location here; no one is explicitly called ‘king/ruler of Norway’. The word does not occur in verse in *Hkr* again until *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar*;⁴¹ here again it is not used to denote a ruler of a kingdom. However, a verse of Glúmr Geirason’s *Gráfeldardrápa* that is recorded only in *Fsk* calls Haraldr gráfeldr “Nóregs konungr”.⁴² If we were to look only at the verse, removed from its prose contexts—

over the following two decades; the most recent presentation of her views is in Malmros (2005), and Malmros (2006) (responding to Lund’s most recent rebuttal (2006)), which papers provide references to the many earlier stages of the debate; their points of view are summarised in English in Lund (1993), and Malmros (2002).

³⁹ *Hkr* I: 116, v. 44 (*HkrH*: 75). The use of the term ‘Austmaðr’ in a poem ostensibly by a Norwegian poet is in itself perhaps telling: this was, logically enough, a standard term used for Norwegians by Icelanders, but makes less sense when used by a Norwegian about a Norwegian king—unless it is not taken as a term implying rule over all ‘Norwegians’, but rather understood as signifying Haraldr’s rule over the eastern part of what later became Norway. Another possible explanation for the use of this term is, of course, an unwitting slip on the part of a later Icelandic skald at some point during the transmission of the poem from its putative tenth-century date of composition to its recording in the thirteenth century. (The discrepancies between the *Fsk* and *Hkr* versions of this poem in relation to its use as a source for political history are briefly discussed also by Sverrir Jakobsson (2002: 220–1).)

⁴⁰ “And the lineage of Valorous Þórr had grown in Norway” (*Hkr* I: 82, v. 31; *HkrH*: 50).

⁴¹ *Hkr* I: 371, v. 172 (*HkrH*: 244).

⁴² *Fsk*: 102, v. 66 (*FskF*: 78–9). There is no manuscript containing any more-or-less complete version of the poem, and modern treatments of it as a whole are always based on modern reconstructions, the problems of which are discussed later in this chapter. For a recent interpretation of the (reconstructed) poem, see Goeres (2010: 144–56).

as Marold does—these instances would appear to show that there was already a notion of a ‘ruler of Norwegians’ and a ‘king of Norway’ by the time of Haraldr hárfagri and Haraldr gráfeldr respectively; this would be the result of reading the verse in *Fsk* alone. But a reader of the verse in *Hkr* would not get such an impression, which makes it apparent that even our understandings of changes in how the poetry presents any kind of concepts (and one could broaden the analysis beyond terms related to ‘national’ identity) are dependent on the mediation of the prose works in which the verses are (or are not) contained. Is it a coincidence that *Fsk*, the only one of the compendia for which the idea of Norwegian authorship has been entertained in the modern scholarship, has verses that seem to show a Norwegian monarchy as far back as Haraldr hárfagri? It is clear that unless we can be absolutely certain that we can reconstruct, from completely different prose contexts, whole poems and date them, in this reconstructed complete form, back to a particular period, we need to consider the ways in which the compendia use the poems, and which stanzas are included or omitted; doing so gives us a very different picture of the changes in concepts of, for example, Norwegian identity than what we get from looking at the reconstructed poems alone.

Further discrepancies between verse and prose are revealed by a quick scan of *Hkr*. In this text, in the prose, ‘Nóregr’ occurs several hundred times; ‘Norðmaðr’ occurs over 70 times;⁴³ in contrast, these terms are used only 13 times altogether in verses that spread fairly evenly across the whole period covered by *Hkr*: once in *Ynglinga saga* (interestingly, the prose does not mention Norway or Norwegians here);⁴⁴ four times in *Hákonar saga góða*;⁴⁵ once in *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar*;⁴⁶ three times each

⁴³ The prose instances in *Hkr* of ‘Nóregr’/‘Norðmaðr’ are too numerous to be worth listing here in detail, but a systematic analysis of the use of the terms might be revealing, not least in with regard to how the prose differs from the verse. My data, though checked against the Íslenzk fornrit edition, were compiled from the electronic text available at <http://www.snerpa.is/net/snorri/heimskri.htm> (accessed 25 February 2006). It should be noted that because of the problems involved in establishing whether or not a verse belongs to a longer poem (discussed below), I have not tried to determine whether the individual verses might be connected to others, and therefore whether, as in the verses of Þjóðólfr Arnórsson (*Hkr* III: vv. 58, 65, 66), both Norwegians and Danes/Denmark are mentioned across the whole poem, but not necessarily in one verse. Note, however, that *Norðmenn* occur in the verse of Eyvindr skáldaspillir at *Hkr* I: 189, v. 81, and Danes occur in the next verse by the same poet.

⁴⁴ *Hkr* I: 82, v. 31.

⁴⁵ *Hkr* I: 186, v. 76; 187, v. 78; 188, v. 80; 189, v. 81.

⁴⁶ *Hkr* I: 371, v. 172.

in *Óláfs saga helga*⁴⁷ and *Magnúss saga góða*;⁴⁸ and once in *Magnúss saga berfætts*⁴⁹ (there are, interestingly enough, no occurrences in *Haralds saga ins hárfagra*). In five of these instances, where Norwegians or Norway are named, so too are Danes or Denmark, against whom the Norwegians are fighting in the poems.⁵⁰

Could these coincidences of Denmark/Danes and Norway/Norwegians in the verse suggest that the identification as Norwegian is of importance when defined against others, whereas regional affiliations have the upper hand in most other situations? Neither term is used in any verse regarding Haraldr hárfagri, the king who supposedly unified Norway, and while the verses in his saga do mention many battles within Norway, the only kinds of identifications given are regional, and there is no explicit (or even, I would argue, implicit) verse support for the claim that he was the first to rule all of Norway.⁵¹ When the subjects of poems are described as rulers in the verse, they are often said to rule over specific regions or peoples of what later became Norway, but rarely Norway as a whole. There is, in fact,

⁴⁷ *Hkr* II: 35–6, v. 31; 310, v. 118; 311, v. 119.

⁴⁸ *Hkr* III: 17, v. 16; 55, v. 58; 59, v. 66.

⁴⁹ *Hkr* III: 211, v. 170.

⁵⁰ *Hkr* I: 186, v. 76 (Danes); 371, v. 172 (the Danish king Sveinn); *Hkr* II: 310, v. 118; 311, v. 119; III: 59, v. 65 (Denmark; this last instance is possibly part of a longer poem that deals substantially with disputes between Norway and Denmark, and both countries are named, though not always in the same verses, but, for example, Denmark occurs in v. 65, and 'Norðmenn' in v. 66; on the poem and the possibility of reconstruction it, cf. Whaley (2007)).

⁵¹ The tradition that Haraldr ruled all of Norway (which is not necessarily the same as saying that he unified it) goes back to Ari, who says that "[Haraldr] es fyrstr varð þess kyns einn konungr at öllum Norvegi" (*Ísl*: 3; Grønlie, trans. 2006: 3: "[Haraldr] who was the first of this kin to be sole king of all Norway"). Similar statements are made by all the other historians covering this period, though there are minor variations between the texts: cf. *HARN* 6: l. 5–6 (McDougall and McDougall, trans. 1998: 5, ll. 2–3): "Hic primum expulit omnes regulos et solus obtinuit regnum totius Norwagiæ" ("He was the first to expel all the sub-kings and to obtain, alone, power over all of Norway"); the *HN*: XI,1: "Haraldus Comatus [...] totius maritimæ zone regnum nactus est primus; mediterranee quidem zone adhuc reguli presidebant, sic tamen quasi sub eius dominio" ("Haraldr fairhair [...] was the first to obtain the reign over all of the maritime region; but sub-kings still ruled the inner parts of the land, although as if under his overlordship"); *Ágrip*: 4 (Driscoll, ed. and trans. 1995: 3): "eignaðisk hann [sc. Haraldr] fyrstr konunga einn Nóreg" ("He was the first of kings to possess, alone, Norway"); *Fsk*: 71 (*FskF*: 51): "Þat var tíu vetr, er hann barðisk til lands áðr en hann yrði einvaldskonungr at Nóregi [note that the last word, "Nóregi", is an editorial addition]" ("It was ten years that he fought for the land before he became the sole king of Norway"); and *Hkr* I: 118 (*HkrH*: 76): "Haraldr konungr var nú einvaldi orðinn alls Nóregs" ("King Haraldr had now become the sole ruler of all Norway"). The *HN* is the only text to state explicitly that Haraldr's rule was limited, and thus seems to adopt a more critical perspective on the early unification of Norway than all the other works.

remarkably little evidence for any concept of 'Norwegian' identity before c.1100, despite the claims made for such a notion from the twelfth century onwards. The earliest contemporary account of a part of Scandinavia that seems to be distinguished as Norway, where Norwegians live, is the report of Ohthere (Öttar), a Northman who travelled to the court of the English king Alfred in the last third of the ninth century. This account, we should note, does not explicitly mention a king or kingdom in Norway, though it provides a number of other apparently accurate ethnographic and geographical details.⁵² Nevertheless, Ohthere seems to know of discrete group of people called Norwegians ('Norðmen'), whose land is variously called "Norðmanna land" and "Norðweg", and is distinguished from "sweoland" and "Denamarc". Even if Ohthere cannot be used as evidence for the beginnings of a kingdom, this text certainly seems to show that there might have been differing perceptions of identities in Scandinavia by this point, though whether these terms reflect self-perception ('Wir-Gefühl'), or designations of outsiders cannot be determined.⁵³

⁵² The narrative is a part of the prologue to the Old English translation of Orosius, and is given in Bately (ed. 1980: 13–16).

⁵³ For a cautious discussion of the various stages of Norwegian unification, which grants tentative credence to the saga accounts, see Krag (2003). Note that although generally sceptical of the sagas, Krag believes that *Haraldskvæði* is contemporary to the events it records, and therefore that the battle of Hafrsfjörð, in which Haraldr is said finally to have crushed all significant opposition, "may be considered to be the first major event in Norwegian history for which there is fairly reliable written evidence" (2003: 187). This seems to ignore the fact that the evidence was *written* several centuries after it is supposed to have been composed. A more critical view of national and ethnic identity in the period up to c.1100 is given by Eric Christiansen (2006a: 112–32; 121–6 on Norwegians and Icelanders); he argues for a minimalist reading, stating baldly that "the distinction of Norwegians from other Northmen was no sharper than the lines between Norwegian law-districts", though he concedes that the notion of Norwegian-ness "may have meant more among the Norse colonists out west, who looked east for the mother-country" (123). See also his discussion of the better attested territorial distinctions (87–111). A contrary view is presented by Else Mundal (1997), who believes that terms like 'hǫrða grannr' do not simply mean 'prince of Hǫrðaland', but imply 'king of Norway', though she concedes that a sense of Norwegian identity might have been weak; she suggests further that in the initial period of settlement, Icelanders might have shared this sense of Norwegian identity. Sverre Bagge believes that a concept of Norway as a kingdom might have developed quite late, but nevertheless that there was a concept of "national ideology", albeit "not closely linked to the idea of a Norwegian state or national community" (1995: 8); he does not clarify what any of these terms mean. Examining the period after 1100, Sverrir Jakobsson (2005) concedes some form of self-perception of Icelandic identity, but stresses that this coexisted with various other, equally important types of 'Wir-Gefühl': belonging to a local community of a particular Icelandic district; belonging to the community of Christendom; and belong to the community of northern peoples. Being 'Icelandic' was primarily a way of asserting some sort of autonomy from the powerful Norwegian kings, and local and Christian forms

As we have seen, *Haraldskvæði* and *Gráfeldardrápa* are recorded in *Fsk* in a form different from their *Hkr*-versions; in *Fsk*, they appear to bear witness to an earlier evolution of a concept of 'Norway' than the verse in *Hkr*. This begs the question as to why the latter's author seems to have left out verses that could apparently attest to an early development of a notion of Norwegian kingship (and incidentally might support the argument for *Fsk*'s Norwegian authorship). Interestingly, although *Hkr* (following all the earlier written prose sources) clearly gives Haraldr hárfagri a major role in unifying Norway, in the verse in *Hkr*, he is never identified as a ruler of 'Norway' or 'Norwegians' (cf. n. 36 above). The lack of specific designation in the verse as 'Norwegian' does not prevent *Hkr* from consistently calling its subjects the kings of Norway in the prose, and it is thus that they are universally accepted; a closer examination of the differences between verse and prose in a case like this might reveal to what extent purportedly contemporary sources actually agree with what might be a later interpretation.

Obviously, the fact that the kings are not called kings of Norway does not mean that their contemporaries did not perceive them thus; but given what even *Hkr* (despite its general attitude of portraying Norway as a coherent, unified entity) reports about the disintegration of 'unified' Norway after Haraldr hárfagri, and the many relatively independent domains that had greater or lesser freedom from the kings' rule over the centuries, it may be worth examining to what extent the concept of the 'king of Norway' is projected back into an earlier period from a time when the monarchy was in fact very strong, even if what is said to be contemporary verse does not unambiguously support such an interpretation.⁵⁴ It is worth noting again that the synoptics were written at a time when Norway was in fact again not united, and the compendia were composed when the monarchy had just wrested control over Norway again; to what extent could the stress on an ancient unity of Norway under kings be a

of identity were probably, for the most part, more important. Sverrir's ideas are not without validity for the earlier period.

⁵⁴ Similarly Sverrir Jakobsson (1999: 93); Krag (2003). Sverrir presents a number of other fundamental objections to trying to derive any notions of nationality from the extant texts, including the fact that Icelanders (whose contact with Norway was primarily through the royal courts) are probably not the best informants for any sense of Norwegian identity. See also Sawyer and Sawyer (2004) for further discussion of the relative weakness of the early Scandinavian monarchies. For a recent critical view of the actual strength of the Norwegian monarchy even in the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries, see Orning (2008).

factor of the contemporary political situation of the authors of these texts, and independent of ancient (verse or prose) reports?⁵⁵

We should note here also Theodore Andersson's suggestion with regard to verse and prose in the *Hkr* version of *Óláfs saga helga*, that while much of the prose that is not connected to or dependent on verse depicts disputes between Óláfr and Norwegian magnates, "not a single one of [the 178 stanzas in *Óláfs saga helga*] seems to allude to political tensions between King Óláfr and the Norwegian magnates".⁵⁶ Whether we agree with this or not, however, is to some extent a matter of interpretation, and as we have seen, interpreting skaldic verse is not always easy; Andersson himself does point out that the verses do mention that chieftains were 'bribed' by Knútr, and this in itself might be viewed as a sign of conflict.⁵⁷ The problems of interpretation are apparent from Andersson's own phrasing: "nothing in the stanzas *requires us to believe* that there was a history of *deep-seated animosity* between Óláfr and the chieftains".⁵⁸ Andersson asks whether perhaps "Óláfr's political conflict with the magnates was, at least primarily, an Icelandic issue", and suggests that the conflict as depicted in the saga "owes something to the tensions between Iceland and Norway in the period 1215–20";⁵⁹ this is certainly an interpretation worth bearing in mind, but the fact is that although the prose contains much more narrative about tension between Óláfr and Norwegian magnates, the verse also certainly refers to some conflict, whether or not this can be categorised as "deep-seated animosity". Nevertheless, here—as is generally the case—there are often some divergences between verse and prose, and more detailed analysis than Andersson provides might well prove illuminating in helping us distinguish between the ideology expressed in verse and that of the prose.⁶⁰

⁵⁵ In a similar vein, it would appear from Krag's study that the term *yinglingr* need not be a dynastic designation in the verse, but becomes so in the twelfth century—and even in verse, it is not attested in all manuscripts of the poems on Haraldr hárfagri that use the term (1991: 208–11). Could this also be an effort at claiming legitimacy for a particular dynasty by appeal to an ancient and possibly quasi-divine past?

⁵⁶ Andersson (2008b: 35).

⁵⁷ Andersson (2008b: 35–6).

⁵⁸ Andersson (2008b: 36; emphasis added; cf. the use of "seems to" in the previous quote).

⁵⁹ Andersson (2008b: 36).

⁶⁰ The relevant verses are *Hkr* II: 29, v. 26; 105–6, vv. 59–60; 294–6, vv. 106–9; 303–4; vv. 110–11; 314, v. 120; 334, v. 135; 383–6, v. 155–7; 391, v. 160; 399, v. 164 (*HkrH*: 260–1; 313–14; 451–2; 458; 465; 478–9).

Obviously, when verse and prose match, it might not just be because the prose interpretation is contemporaneous with the verse, but rather because the verse has been altered;⁶¹ but when verse and prose are not fully in accord, we may postulate that the verse is in fact older, and represents a different conceptualisation of the notion of kingship or nationality (to remain with the example I have chosen—other topics could also be thus examined). Needless to say, one would have to check for consistency in the verse, not just in the excerpts cited in *Hkr*, and one would also have to check all known verse, and its prose contexts, for each individual king, and pay heed to manuscript variants. It would be necessary, in addition, to compare the reports of the same poems in the other compendia; as we have seen with *Haraldskvæði* and *Gráfeldardrápa*, the two compendia that contain these poems provide us with rather different perspectives on when verse began to use terms connoting Norwegian rulership.⁶² It should also be stressed that simply tabulating the number of occurrences of a word such as ‘Nóregr’ does not amount to proving the existence of any notions of nationality: each instance must be examined within its context, and we must also know exactly what words such as ‘Nóregr’ and ‘Norðmaðr’ mean in all their contexts in the sagas. It is far from self-evident that they must indicate any concepts of national identity; nor do they illuminate what national identity might have meant in the middle ages.⁶³

The possibility of discrepancy between prose and verse leads us to another sensitive subject: the stability and authenticity of skaldic verse. Information that is extracted from skaldic verse is normally taken from

⁶¹ A possible explanation for the relatively large number of mentions of Norwegian-ness in the part of *Hkr* dealing with kings before Óláfr helgi Haraldsson might have been a desire, in the twelfth century (and inherited from twelfth-century sources by the thirteenth-century *Hkr*), to increase the appearance of Norwegian unity for a period when such a unity was in fact precarious; there might have been no such need for the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, when the existence of a Norwegian kingdom might have been almost taken for granted.

⁶² In this context we should note Jón Viðar Sigurðsson’s suggestion (1999: 220) regarding the *Íslendingasögur* and their value in understanding Icelandic social and political structures, that it would be useful to compare their vocabulary and usage with those of the *samtíðarsögur*, the ‘contemporary’ sagas about Iceland in the thirteenth century. Given that we have a similar situation with the kings’ sagas (extant sagas about earlier kings, as well as *Sverris saga* and *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar*, about contemporary kings), it would be useful to follow this suggestion in this context too. Are there differences between the sagas of earlier and of contemporary kings in the kind of vocabulary used and the way kings—past and present—are portrayed? Clearly, there remains much fairly basic work to be done on these subjects.

⁶³ I differ here from Kåre Lunden (1995); see also the critique of Lunden in Sverrir Jakobsson (1999).

modern, often emended or composite texts, without much attention to the variant readings or differing prose contexts. Because of the complex demands of skaldic verse, especially that in *dróttkvætt* metre,⁶⁴ it is generally assumed, even by normally cautious critics such as Gade, that the wording of skaldic poetry changed little or not at all in the centuries between composition and written record.⁶⁵ But the written record itself does not speak with a unified voice: Poole, Christopher Abram and Marold, in meticulous examinations of the manuscript traditions of Egill Skalla-Grímsson's *Höfuðlausn*, Þorbjörn hornklofi's *Glymdrápa*, and (among other poems), verses from *Bjarnar saga Híðlakappa* and *Eyrbyggja saga* respectively, have shown that variants could function perfectly well within the constraints both of metrical rules and of sense.⁶⁶ Thus these scholars argue that we cannot necessarily reckon with 'fixed' texts and single authors. Abram and Marold find that the scribes were themselves competent editors (and perhaps even authors), altering the verse when they saw fit, thus making it impossible to determine the extent to which extant poetry is the creation of the poet to whom it is attributed, or of the vagaries of textual transmission; Marold stresses particularly the creativeness of the various links in transmission of skaldic verse in producing variant versions. Although Abram desires openness to even more flexibility in textual transmission than argued for by Poole, an important aspect of the latter's thesis is the stress on the element of variability inherent in the oral performance of skaldic verse, something already argued for by Bjarne Fidjestøl with regard to the same poem;⁶⁷ Fidjestøl points out further that it does not seem possible to distinguish, on the basis of evidence we have, between oral and scribal variants.

From the work of these scholars it becomes clear that a number of manuscript variants might derive from different performing versions of the author himself, or of his successors; if thirteenth-century scribes were

⁶⁴ Note that this is the preferred metre cited by *Hkr*'s author, who, like the author of *Fsk*, often tends to leave out verses in other metres that are in *Msk*, one of his main sources—perhaps because he also assumes that this metre could not be corrupted?

⁶⁵ Andersson and Gade (2000: 25); Gade (2000b: 65).

⁶⁶ Poole (1993); Abram (2001); Marold (2005: 256–68). *Höfuðlausn* is in *Egils saga* (Bjarni Einarsson, ed. 2003: 106–12; Hermann Pálsson and Edwards, trans. 1976: 158–62); *Glymdrápa* is in *Fsk* and *Hkr* (cf. n. 37 above), and *Hkr*'s reporting of it is discussed below. The verses discussed by Marold are vv. 12 and 29 of *Bjarnar saga* (Sigurður Nordal and Guðni Jónsson, eds. 1938; Viðar Hreinsson et al., trans. 1997a), and vv. 27 and 28 of *Eyrbyggja saga* (Einar Ól. Sveinsson and Matthías Þórðarson, eds. 1935; Viðar Hreinsson et al., trans. 1997c).

⁶⁷ Fidjestøl (1982: 47–52); see, more generally, Fidjestøl (1982: 45–60) on the problem of oral versus written transmission of skaldic verse.

skilful enough to alter the wording of verses without disturbing metre or sense, so surely were skalds in the centuries before (who, we must presume, were the principal bearers of transmission before the verses were fixed in writing), and so too was the poet himself—and we cannot assume *a priori* that a skald would have had the same notion of fixed texts as we do. It seems entirely likely that skaldic verse was not preserved solely as a historical artefact, but also as something performed before the current monarchs (or other audiences). If the poems are genuinely old and thus survived through oral transmission, the bearers of this tradition would most likely have been accomplished skalds themselves, and therefore fully capable of altering the verses to suit their needs according to the immediate performance context—and once again, we do not know the extent to which our notions of the sacrosanct nature of the fixed text may legitimately be applied to oral culture in early medieval Iceland. We have little justification for attempting to fix any single reading as an authorial and thus authoritative version.⁶⁸

The arguments discussed above have reverberations not just with regard to the two poems given as examples; the linguistic and metrical complexity of the two works under consideration might in fact make them less susceptible to alteration without breaking the rules of sense and metre than other poems, and it is apparent that such changes might have consequences for our understanding of the historical information contained in the verses. Only a thorough examination of all manuscript variants of each poem can tell to what extent such variants can alter the content in such a way as to have a bearing on the facts we may glean from each individual poem. While it must be conceded that the variants adduced by Abram and Poole do not change the factual content of the texts they examine very much, this is not really the point: their studies prove that twelfth- and thirteenth-century scribes were capable of understanding and modifying verse within the constraints of putatively archaic metre and language. This means that the very authenticity of these verses as ancient works is called into question: with the exception of a few runic inscriptions, no one would argue for written skaldic verse before the twelfth century, and if we can see that poets/scribes/editors of the twelfth century or later

⁶⁸ In this context, see also the interesting comments of Jesch (1994) with regard to the problem of editing and reconstructing skaldic verse, demonstrated with the example of Sigvatr's poem on Ástriðr Óláfsdóttir; she concludes that a reconstruction of a text as composed by the skald seems impossible, though a plausible version of what might have been known to *Hkr's* author can be reasonably well edited by modern scholars (5).

could competently alter works that are supposedly of an earlier period, without, however, making these poems appear obviously ‘modern’ in any way, surely they could also compose poems, or change them in ways that do indeed affect the content, without our necessarily being able to detect which parts of the verses are new, and which old.

In any case, even without the consideration of variant readings, the content of skaldic verse is often inherently ambiguous because of the nature of the syntax and language used. An example from *Glymdrápa* will suffice to illustrate my point. In the eighth stanza of this poem, we read:

Menfergir bar margar
margspakr, Niðar varga
lundr vann sókn á sandi,
sandmens í bý randir,
áðr fyr eljunprúðum
allr herr Skota þverri
lögðis eiðs af láði
lœbrautar varð flœja.⁶⁹

The prose account provided by *Hkr* (this episode is omitted by *HN* and *Fsk*, which is itself perhaps a significant fact) states that the population of the Isle of Man had *already* fled, having heard of the devastation wrought elsewhere by Haraldr’s army: “En er hann kom vestr í Mön, þá hófðu þeir áðr spurt, hvern hernað hann hafði gørt þar í landi, þá flyði allt folk inn á Skotland, ok var þar aleyða af mönnum”.⁷⁰ Quite apart from the basic fact that the verse itself does not name the Isle of Man (the localisation is thus given only in a non-contemporary prose source), we are faced with problems interpreting the word ‘áðr’, which begins the second half of the poem: does it mean ‘before’ (in which case the poem indicates that the king attacked the island before the inhabitants fled), or does it mean ‘earlier’? In the latter case, verse and prose agree, in the former case they do not.⁷¹

⁶⁹ “The very wise dispenser of neck-rings [= generous one] brought many shields to the settlements by the sea—the tree of the wolves of Niðr [Niðr = sea; wolves of the sea = ships; their tree = sailor] won the battle on the sand—*before* the whole host of the Scots had to flee from the sea-shore before the diminisher of the isthmus of the sword [isthmus of the sword = shield; its diminisher = warrior]” (*Hkr* I: 121, v. 48; *HkrH*: 77–8; my emphasis).

⁷⁰ “But when he came west to Man, they had earlier heard what harrying he had done on the land; thus all the people fled to Scotland and it was altogether empty of people there” (*Hkr* I: 121; *HkrH*: 77).

⁷¹ See further the debate in von See (1977; 1981; 1999: 272–4), and Hofmann (1978–9); on the textual problems posed by this poem, cf. Abram (2001), and Fidjestøl (1982: 73–80). On the history of the Scandinavians in the Isle of Man, see most recently Wilson (2008).

Gerd Wolfgang Weber argues for the latter reading, stating that “Snorri mehr von den geschichtlichen Ereignissen [...] wußte als unsereiner—und daß er mit der Skaldendichtung und ihren Möglichkeiten wie auch mit der altisländischen Sprache vielleicht doch etwas vertrauter war als der eine oder andere neuzeitliche Leser”.⁷² While Snorri (or whoever might have authored *Hkr*) most certainly knew his language better than any of us today, this does not mean his information was necessarily more accurate;⁷³ it would be easy to make a list of other instances where *Hkr*’s interpretation of the verse need not be the only one, and where his report is in fact not corroborated by the verse (some examples are given below; cf. the earlier discussion of *Ynglingatal*). It seems to me that in this particular case, the poem is linguistically ambiguous, and an interpretation depends not so much on linguistic skill as on background information or point of view. Given that the *Hkr*-author—like the authors of *Msk* and *Fsk*—was already at a remove of at least two generations from all the events he reported, and in this case the gap was about three centuries, how much faith should we have in his prose interpretations of the verse? Especially given the innate potential variability of oral tradition, and the variants recorded by the manuscripts—whose scribes also surely knew the language better than we do—I would think it inadvisable to plead for much certainty in these issues: skaldic verse, as a historical source, is very suspect, and cannot be made less so by recourse to its prose narrative context.

We should also not take at face value the claims in *Hkr* that skalds would not falsify matters because their audience would perceive this as mockery (the relevant passages are cited in full below); exaggerated praise would probably have been welcome flattery, and worthy of a greater reward, perhaps, than the plain truth.⁷⁴ Especially if kings such as Haraldr Sigurðarson themselves fed the poets information in the interests of “nurturing” a “legend” about themselves,⁷⁵ the information given in the verse need not be

⁷² Weber (1994: 684–5): “Snorri knew more about historical events than we do—and that he was most probably somewhat better acquainted with skaldic poetry and its possibilities, as well as with the Old Icelandic language, than any modern readers”.

⁷³ See also Krag’s critical comments on Snorri’s understanding and treatment of *Glymdrápa* as a whole (1991: 92–3).

⁷⁴ Cf. O’Donoghue (2005: 47); see also Finlay (2004: 29–35), on a similar, if un-stated, theory of poetics in *Fsk*; *Msk* uses verse somewhat differently, with more emphasis on entertainment and aesthetics (Andersson and Gade 2000b: 56–7).

⁷⁵ Andersson and Gade (2000: 59).

reliable and free of exaggeration.⁷⁶ In at least one instance (see below, n. 138) an embassy to Jerusalem is turned into conquest of the holiest city of Christendom; this seems to be a clear instance of inaccurate flattery being received not as mockery, but as praise. We should note, though, Gade's suggestion⁷⁷ that the statement about flattery and mockery in *Hkr* ("Þat væri þá háð, en eigi lof");⁷⁸ is derived from *Msk*: "hann [sc. Giffarðr] veit þat með ser at honom er þetta haþ en eigi lof at því sem efni voro til. en villdi vist eigi gera þat bert fire monnom hversu hann hafði fram gengit a Foxerni".⁷⁹ The context is as follows:⁸⁰ Giffarðr, after offering his services to Magnús berfœttr, proves to be a coward, disappearing before the battle at Fuxerna. Leaving Magnús's retinue in disgrace, he encounters an Icelander on the ship back to England, who composes a mocking verse about him when he lies low in bad weather instead of helping to bail out the ship. Upon landing, he arraigns the Icelander for slander, and the latter recites a very flattering verse about Giffarðr's deeds at Fuxerna (and this is the context for Giffarðr's thoughts on mockery and praise cited above), following which the judge lets the Icelander free.

If the author of *Hkr* drew his theory from this account—and note that while there is some correspondence of vocabulary with regard to mockery and praise, the story of Giffarðr is left out in *Hkr*—there is a certain amount of (possibly unconscious?) irony here: Giffarðr *was* indeed a failure, but only he and the Icelander knew it. Could there be a parallel to a king returning from battles in faraway places, with few apart from his (Icelandic) skalds knowing what really happened there? The situation might have been very different indeed if (a) a poet was not turning a

⁷⁶ Andersson and Gade's suggestion that "Haraldr's sense of literature may have had a formative influence on how the kings' saga as a genre ultimately evolved" (2000: 59; see also Turville-Petre 1968) is suggestive: his saga is especially given to adventure-tales, which may derive in large part from foreign sources (on which see chapter three), but also, perhaps, from information he supplied to his skalds—which could hardly be regarded as very reliable! Hans Kuhn finds that the adventure structure (miraculous childhood—adventure abroad—return to kingship) is present in the sagas of many other kings too (1976); this is surely partly a literary convention, and suggests, therefore, at least questionable historical veracity.

⁷⁷ Gade (2000a: 183–4).

⁷⁸ "that would be mockey, and not praise" (*Hkr* I: 5; *HkrH*: 4); this is repeated in the *Separate saga*, to which Gade refers, and which is cited below.

⁷⁹ "He knew in his heart that this was mockery and not praise, given what the circumstances were, but on no account did he want to reveal to people how he had comported himself at Foxerni [Fuxerna]" (*Msk*: 326; *MskAG*: 305; I cite here the translation of *MskAG*).

⁸⁰ *Msk*: 323–6 (*MskAG*: 303–5).

failure into a hero, but dressing up a battle to make it far more successful than it really was (for example, turning a truce into an outright slaughter); (b) if all the people in the audience knew perfectly well how inaccurate the poet's account was, but would not have said anything because of the king's greater resources in the context of his own court, regardless of how unsuccessful he might have been on campaign; or (c) if the author aimed at two audiences simultaneously, a Norwegian one, which might have had a particular tradition following which exaggerated narratives might have been received as praise, and an Icelandic one, which might have had access to additional material from an Icelandic perspective, and might have taken a panegyric with a pinch of salt (this often seems to be the attitude of *Msk*). And of course, the whole question of posthumous praise is very different. *Hkr* does not include Giffarðr's story; is it beyond the bounds of possibility that on occasion its author, like the skald in that story, might have included matter that he knew or felt was false—but which was perhaps current at the Norwegian court, and would have been accepted as praise there? It is surely not a coincidence that the text from which influence is adduced here is *Msk*, which, whatever its attitude to Norwegian kings, is very pro-Icelandic, and shows on a number of occasions Icelanders getting the better of Norwegian kings. What is acknowledged as mockery by the Icelandic in the know might be received as praise by the Norwegian who depends on Icelanders for historical narratives, and is not aware of alternative traditions that have more praise of Icelanders.⁸¹ At any rate, the implications of the use of the phrase in *Msk* should give us pause in interpreting its meaning in *Hkr*, given that the latter's author clearly knew *Msk*.

Hkr's own statements regarding the reliability of skaldic verse are not entirely reassuring: the author says that the verse is true when it concerns battles and journeys;⁸² should we take this to mean that he himself

⁸¹ In this context, see Orning's comparison of the differences in portrayal of Hákon Hákonarson and Icelandic magnates in *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar* and *Íslendinga saga* (a section of *Sturlunga saga*), which were both composed by Sturla Þórðarson, but manifestly for different audiences, and seem to reflect different perspectives: that of the Norwegian court, and that of the Icelandic aristocracy (Orning 2008: 227–56). A similar kind of dual perspective is suggested for *Egils saga* by Andersson (1999: 929), who speculates that it may have been intended to be read by a Norwegian audience as “a humorous send-up of a self-willed Icelandic”, and by Icelanders as “a serious celebration of an ancestral hero who could stand up to the kings of Norway”.

⁸² *Hkr* I: 5 (*HkrH*: 4): “Tökum vér þat allt fyrir satt, er í þeim kvæðum finnsk um ferðir þeira eða orrostur” (“We accept all of that as true which is found in those poems regarding their [sc. the chieftains'] journeys or battles”).

disbelieves verse not about these subjects?⁸³ The prologues to *Hkr* and the *Separate saga* enunciate a famous theory of historicity and the value of skaldic verse; although the part of the latter prologue containing the author's apparent endorsement of skaldic verse as a reliable source is frequently cited, the passage is fraught with ambiguity, and worth considering in some detail:

En síðan er Haraldr inn hárfagri var konungr í Nóregi, þá vitu menn miklu górr sannendi at segja frá ævi konunga þeira, er í Nóregi hafa verit. Á hans dögum byggðisk Ísland, ok var þá mikil ferð af Nóregi til Íslands. Spurðu menn þá á hverju sumri tíðendi landa þessa í milli, ok var þat síðan í minni fært ok haft eptir til frásagna. En þó þykki mér þat merkiligast til sannenda, er *berum* [!] orðum er sagt í kvæðum eða qðrum kveðskap, þeim er svá var ort um konunga eða aðra hofðingja, at *þeir sjálfir heyrðu*, eða í erfikvæðum þeim, er skáldin fœrðu *sonum þeira*. Þau orð, er í kveðskap standa, eru in *sömu sem í fyrstu vátu, ef rétt er kveðit*, þótt hverr maðr hafi síðan numit at qðrum, ok má því ekki breyta. En sögu þær, er sagðar eru, þá er þat hætt, at *eigi skilisk qllum á einn veg*. En sumir hafa eigi minni, þá er frá líðr, hvernig þeim var sagt, ok gengsk þeim mjök í minni optliga, ok verða frásagnir ómerkiligar. Þat var meirr en tvau hundruð vetra tólfrœð, er Ísland var byggt, áðr menn tœki hér sögur at rita, ok var þat lqng ævi ok vant, at sögur hefði eigi gengizk í munni, ef eigi væri kvæði, *bæði ný ok forn*, þau er menn tœki þar af sannendi frœðinnar. Svá haft gqrt fyrr frœðimenninir, þá er þeir vildu sannenda leita, at *taka fyri satt þeira manna orð, er sjálfir sá tíðendi ok þá vátu nær staddir*. En þar er skáldin vátu í orrostum, þá eru tœk vitni þeira, svá þat ok, er hann kvað fyr sjálfum hofðingjanum, þá myndi hann eigi þora at segja þau verk hans, er bæði sjálfr hofðinginn ok allir þeir, er heyrðu, vissu, at hann hefði hvergi nær verit. Þat hværi þá háð, en eigi lof.⁸⁴

⁸³ Pamela Peters (1978) believes that Snorri does indeed accept verse as a historical source only for battles and journeys, but her arguments are not fully convincing; there is no reason to presume, for instance, that the *Hkr*-author does not believe Eyvindr skáldaspillir's verses on the famine in Norway are accurate (*Hkr* I: 220–4, vv. 102–4; *HkrH*: 142–3). Poole (1991: 12–15), discusses how *Hkr* appears to alter the context of Eyvindr's poem from what is presented by *Fsk* (98–9, v. 60).

⁸⁴ “But after the time when Haraldr hárfagri was king of Norway, people were better prepared to tell the truth about the lives of those kings who had ruled in Norway. In his time Iceland was settled, and there was much travel from Norway to Iceland. Every summer men asked around about the news of these lands, and that was afterwards remembered and preserved in stories. But nevertheless it seems to me noteworthy to affirm as true that which is said in *plain* [!] words in poems or in other verse, in those words which were composed regarding kings or other rulers, *which they themselves heard*, or in those funeral poems that the skalds performed for *their sons*. Those words that are in the verse *are the same as they first were, if the verse is recited correctly*, even though each man has since heard it from others, and cannot change it. But regarding the [prose?] narratives which are told, there is a danger that they are not understood by all in the same manner. And some people have no memory for what was said to them once it has passed, and

Beginning with a narrative about the genesis of stories about Norway, the *Hkr*-author seems to suggest that stories without verse are liable to change, and can only be thought of as reliable if secured by verse (it is worth noting, incidentally, that the opening of this passage could thus be read as implying that material about events before Haraldr hárfagri is a bit dubious, calling into question *Ynglinga saga* and *Ynglingatal*). In other words, while he certainly knows of oral prose traditions,⁸⁵ he does not, to my mind, seem to grant them much credence without the guarantor of verse. He acknowledges the problems of verse: only if it is recited correctly can it be believed, and there are different ways of understanding the sagas. The prologue to *Hkr* gives a similar, though less detailed treatment of these issues; there, the author states that some of his narrative is based on verses that were meant as entertainment (“er menn hafa haft til skemmtanar sér”).⁸⁶ To what extent does he understand entertainment and the preservation of something corresponding to our notion of factual truth as being in harmony?⁸⁷

It is apparent that the author of these prologues (accepting that they were composed by the same person) knows that the chronological gap between himself and Óláfr could cause misunderstanding. Yet he feels, obviously, that contemporary verse, composed by eyewitnesses, is a reliable source—even though he appears to acknowledge that it was originally

what is in their memory changes often, and the stories become insignificant. It was more than two hundred years after Iceland was settled before men began to write sagas, and that was a long time and it was customary that the sagas would no longer have been commonly spoken, had there not been poems, *both new and old*, from which men perceived the truth of the histories. The wise men of the past have acted thus when they wanted to seek the truth: *they accepted as true the words of those men who themselves saw the events and stood close by* [to what was happening]. And when the skalds were in a battle, then their testimony is acceptable, as also when the skald recited before the ruler himself: he would not dare in that situation to speak his composition when the ruler himself and all those who heard knew that he had not been near [to the events]. That would be mockery, not praise” (*Hkr* II: 421–2, my emphasis) This passage is not included in *HkrH*, but a full translation is given by Andersson (2008, 5–6). Cf. *Hkr* I: 3–7 (*HkrH*: 3–5), for a less cogent statement of roughly the same ideas.

⁸⁵ As suggested by Andersson (2008b).

⁸⁶ *Hkr* I: 4 (*HkrH*: 3).

⁸⁷ On the notion of history as entertainment, cf. Partner’s study of twelfth-century Anglo-Norman historians (1977); see also Sverrir Tómasson (1988: 130–40) on the Icelandic (primarily hagiographic) material. Both scholars find that there was not necessarily a contradiction between edification and entertainment, but that neither necessarily matched modern concepts of historicity. Etymologically, ‘skemmtan’ means a ‘shortening’, here of time; it need not, therefore, contain any kind of contrast to factual narrative. Similarly in Latin, ‘delectare’ is a word often used for the function of narratives, and again need not be in contradiction to ‘prodesse’ or ‘historia’ (see also Würth 1998: 182–6).

intended as ‘entertainment’; he appears further to believe that he has access to verse that is “rétt kveðit” (“correctly recited”), and he depends on the practice of wise men of accepting only that verse as true which was spoken by those who were present at the events and saw them. This means that we must trust the author regarding whether or not the verses are “rétt kveðit”; variants in the manuscript tradition of all the compendia, as well as differences of interpretation of verse between the three compendia, leave considerable room for doubt as to which versions are indeed “rétt kveðit”, leaving the possibility open that this is not really an objective judgement. We should also take into account the statement in the prologue to *Hkr* that verse is “least distorted if it is not only “rétt kveðit” but also “sensibly interpreted” (“En kvæðin þykkja mér sízt ór stað færð, ef þau eru rétt kvæðit ok skynsamliga upp tekin”).⁸⁸ The author’s judgement in terms of understanding verse ‘skynsamliga’ (‘sensibly’) was not even always shared by his contemporaries—and who knows to what extent he or others might have ‘corrected’ verses to make them more comprehensible?

This part of the theory, if we may dignify it with such a term, is as it is problematic; but in addition, what are we to make of the statement that the sagas would have been lost had there not been poems “bæði ný ok forn” (“both new and old”)? Does this mean that newer poems—those which were not composed by eyewitnesses, but on the basis of traditions we cannot access—are equally admissible for the author as genuine historical record? Newer poems, by definition, were obviously not composed by men who “sjálfir sá tíðendi ok þá váru nær staddir” (“who themselves saw the events and stood close by”). The reliance on eyewitness accounts of contemporaries as well as ‘new’ verses by non-contemporaries, all of which are acceptable as evidence as long as they are correctly recited and understood, is not only contradictory, but also unsatisfactory: it means that the only criterion is, in essence, an aesthetic one. In any case, the author of these texts does not say, explicitly, that being “rétt kveðit” is the criterion that overrides all others: we cannot wish away his claim that eyewitness accounts are what are reliable, even though he appears to contradict this even in theory, and definitely in practice.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ *Hkr* I: 7 (*HkrH*: 5).

⁸⁹ On *Hkr*’s prologues, see Sverrir Tómasson (1988: 208–22; 279–90; 374–83 (on the question of Snorri’s authorship); 1989): Sverrir feels that though the author was aware that verse could be problematic, he trusted some verse as a historical source and only used such trustworthy poems; Sverrir presents no resolutions of the contradictions in the prologues

It is apparent that the ‘theory’ of these prologues is not entirely clear; it is also apparent that *Hkr* does include a number of verses that were composed by men who were not present at the events, for example the portions of *Sexstefja* relating to Haraldr’s journeys abroad, the anecdote about his conquest of Jerusalem, and even the narrative of Stiklarstaðir (references given below). And *Ynglingatal*, apparently used by *Hkr* as authenticating verse, is about several generations of kings, composed by a poet who lived, according to the author, after the death of almost all the subjects of this poem. Presumably the author felt that these verses, even though not composed by eyewitnesses, were authentic because he had access to them in a correct form, and perhaps also because he believed that they were based on eyewitness accounts (note that many of the verses of *Ynglingatal* deal with neither travel nor battle). But if a poet composes a verse about a king based on what that king says, should we believe it provides reliable information? And can we believe, if the poet had access to a different, perhaps less flattering but possibly more accurate account, that he would chose the latter as a basis for his verses over what the king, his patron, told him?

These prologues are really the only theoretical statements in the kings’ sagas about the authenticity and historical value of skaldic verse, and are, as we can see, highly problematic, providing no clear guide to understanding the author’s notion of authenticity, or even to his methods in composing his prosimetrum. Furthermore, while the author of *Hkr* may have been more of a “critical historian” than the author of *Msk*,⁹⁰ like the latter, his interest in verses and narratives was certainly not purely historical; the very skill in composing a ‘literary’ narrative for which *Hkr*’s author receives the praise of modern scholars should caution us against seeing *Hkr* as representing anything necessarily authentically historical in the

that is satisfactory, to my mind at least. See also Meulengracht Sørensen (2001: 174–6): he concludes from the prologue that the author did not treat verse as reliable if it was not verifiable by eyewitnesses, and while this certainly seems to be what *part* of the prologue says, it ignores the aesthetic criteria, and *Hkr*’s actual practice. Phelpstead (2007: 120–7) provides a rather uncritical reading of the prologue to the *Separate saga*, with brief comments on the nature of the verse used in the work; a more nuanced interpretation, in many ways close to that presented here, is given in Clunies Ross (2005: 72–8). Andersson (2008b) provides a brief discussion of these prologues, but is more concerned with using them as evidence of the existence of an oral tradition borne by Icelanders coming home from Norway than as a means of assessing the authenticity of verse or prose or prosimetrum.

⁹⁰ Andersson and Gade (2000: 57).

modern sense.⁹¹ It is well to heed Krag's warning that the saga authors' statements about skaldic verse can—but should not be allowed to—deceive us with respect to the verse's historical value:⁹² even if we accept that the *Hkr*-author felt the verse he cited said the truth, we need to have better criteria than his testimony to judge it by—and we also need to find a way of understanding better how the notion of historical truth in his time might have differed from ours.

We should remember further that if *Hkr* was written by Snorri Sturluson, the author was also much involved in contemporary politics, and it seems unlikely that his supposed objectivity would have overridden his political interests. Wanner has suggested that in the thirteenth century, largely because of Hákon Hákonarson's greater interest in forms of cultural capital originating in Anglo-Norman England and France (which he shared with most contemporary European aristocrats), skaldic verse began to lose its value in the Norwegian court, and thus Icelanders no longer possessed a valuable and unique marketable good.⁹³ *Snorra Edda* is, according to Wanner, an effort both to demonstrate the author's possession of the skill of skaldic versification, and an attempt to create or preserve a market for this sort of cultural capital, by explaining to the king how skaldic verse works, and demonstrating how it can be used to the king's own benefit. Is it not possible to extend these arguments to the 'theory' in *Hkr* and the *Separate saga*? If Snorri was trying to promote himself at the Norwegian court by producing a history of the Norwegian kings, and if he was simultaneously trying to reaffirm the value of skaldic verse through the production of the *Edda*, one could argue, following Wanner, that the statements in the prologues cited above, and indeed the whole of *Hkr* itself, may be read as a means of claiming for skaldic verse and the prosimetrical kings' saga a form of unique cultural capital, possessed by its author to an extraordinary degree—and therefore deserving of extraordinary reward. Particularly if *Hkr* and *Snorra Edda* are read in conjunction, and if one accepts Wanner's arguments that the latter text was not simply an exercise in antiquarian scholarship, but a means of political self-promotion, in which Snorri attempted not only to gain benefit as a

⁹¹ Cf. the cautionary comment of Vésteinn Ólason: "the impression of authenticity derives more from his [sc. the *Hkr*-author's] narrative skill and his psychological and political insight than from his critical scrutiny of sources, or his gifts as a historian in the modern sense of the term" (1998: 59).

⁹² Krag (1991: 92).

⁹³ Wanner (2008).

poet, but also to ensure that such poetry continued to be valued,⁹⁴ the statements regarding the correct interpretation and recitation of verse in *Hkr* are cast in a new light: Snorri, the producer of the most complicated treatise on skaldic verse then extant, was surely especially well-equipped to make sure that verse he cited was “rétt kveðit” and “skynsamliga upp tekin”! Such a thesis would hinge, of course, on the acceptance of Snorri as the author (or at least compiler) both of the *Edda* and of *Hkr*; even if one rejects such authorship, however, but accepts an Icelandic origin for both (and I do not know of any serious arguments against this), the suggestion that *Hkr*’s theoretical statements could be a form of self-promotion of a uniquely Icelandic cultural export still seem plausible. This would further undermine any value attached to the theory and practice of interpreting verse in *Hkr*.

It is apparent that in addition to the issues outlined above, if the verse cannot be securely dated, it is obviously of little use as a historical source for the period of which it purports to tell. Two papers in a recent volume on skald sagas present contrasting views on the dating of verse, which, while not directly dealing with kings’ sagas, are of importance in this context as well.⁹⁵ Gade argues on the basis of linguistic and stylistic criteria that skaldic verse can in fact be (more or less) securely dated.⁹⁶ Her argument is too technical to be entered into in detail here, but there are two fundamental objections to it: firstly, she assigns certain features to a particular period at least in part because they occur in poems from that period, and given that we can normally date the poems only on the basis of the very linguistic features we are trying to date (thus creating a circular argument), or on the basis of not necessarily reliable statements of later saga authors, it seems to me that this kind of method cannot really

⁹⁴ Wanner here develops ideas also enunciated earlier by, for example, Gade (1995: 239–40; 2000b; 89).

⁹⁵ In addition to the papers by Gade and Preben Meulengracht Sørensen discussed in the following paragraphs, there is a more recent attempt by Bergsveinn Birgisson (2008) to date skaldic poems on the basis of what the author calls ‘cognitive archaisms’, particular forms of (bizarre) imagery that, it is suggested, are used as mnemonic devices and exist only from particular periods. A good deal more empirical work with larger statistical samples will be required before we can form an opinion about the reliability of this method, and I suspect that the types of imagery defined by Bergsveinn as ‘cognitive archaisms’ would be quite easily found in poems of an unequivocally late date. In any case, to say that a particular method of composition is only found in poems that are conventionally given an early date does not in itself confirm that date, only that there are some poems with such features and others without.

⁹⁶ Gade (2001).

function. The second problem is that supposedly archaic forms occur in late manuscripts, and were thus clearly known to and understood by later scribes and poets. Moreover, since we can almost certainly rule out written transmission before c.1100 (at the very earliest; few scholars would actually argue that skaldic verse began to be written by this date), the poetry must have been orally transmitted. This implies surely not just an ability to memorise, but also an understanding of the content, language and metrical rules of the poetry being learnt, and an ability to translate 'archaic' linguistic features of orally learnt poetry into a written form that preserves those features. This being the case, even if the later poets do not use such 'archaic' features in poems they explicitly admit are from their own period, why should it be impossible for them to compose poems in an archaic mode, and to attribute them to older poets? (Matters are further complicated by the fact that most scholarship works with editions that present texts emended according to metrical rules only clearly enunciated in the thirteenth century, albeit for poems claimed to be much older; we are thus provided with texts conforming to 'archaic' linguistic rules, but doing so not least because of modern editorial intervention—in addition to whatever medieval scribal or editorial changes they might have undergone.)

I do not suggest here that all purportedly old skaldic verse was actually created in the twelfth or the thirteenth century; what I propose is that while ancient poems did exist and were transmitted up to the period when the sagas began to be written, the bearers of this transmission—twelfth- and thirteenth-century scribes and saga authors, as well as poets and storytellers of these and preceding generations—were capable of altering ancient verse without necessarily making it appear modern to their contemporaries, or to us. In other words, even if we accept that there were ancient skaldic poems about kings, what we actually have might have been changed in a number of ways over the generations between composition and written record, and there is no reliable way of ascertaining which parts of a poem genuinely date from the purported time of composition.

In the same volume, Preben Meulengracht Sørensen presents a provocative argument that saga authors could and did compose stanzas, and placed them in the mouths of historical personages.⁹⁷ This was, moreover, not considered 'inauthentic' by the audience, since the verse served a

⁹⁷ Meulengracht Sørensen (2001).

primarily aesthetic function as a ‘voice from the past’, and would have been deemed an appropriate form for historical narrative: because of the form, the poems would have been accepted as historically ‘true’, even if the audience also knew that the poems may not have been composed by the older poet. Although his arguments are directed to the sagas of Icelanders, not the kings’ sagas, they are nevertheless illuminating with regard to the notion of the authenticity of verse as we find it in the latter, and it is worth considering whether there is, in fact, such a categorical division between ideas of authenticity in the *Íslendingasögur* and *konungasögur* (which Meulengracht Sørensen seems to believe).⁹⁸

Meulengracht Sørensen cites the incident in *Orkneyinga saga* where Jarl Rognvaldr and his men are arguing about who was the first to board a captured ship; they finally ask the earl to come up with a consistent story, and he does so in verse: “Þá mælti sumir, at þat væri ómerkiligt, at þeir hefði eigi allir eina sögu frá þeim stórtíðendum. Ok þar kom, at þeir urðu á þat sáttir, at Rognvaldr jarl skyldi ór skera; skyldi þeir þat síðan allir flytja”.⁹⁹ This account shows a rather different perspective on authentic reportage from what the *Hkr*-author appears to claim he follows: here, we see that verse is supposed to verify a particular event, but the verse is made up specifically to resolve a dispute about that event, and following the saga’s own account, it can hardly be seen as presenting a definitive report of what ‘actually’ happened. But is it really different from instances in *Hkr* in which verses are cited that were composed after the event, and not by an eyewitness? Or does *Hkr*’s belief in the authenticity of its accounts, in such cases, stem from an agreement similar to that in *Orkneyinga saga*: a skald is commissioned to compose verses on the basis of information supplied, possibly by eyewitnesses, and these verses—however much they might harmonise, and thus potentially distort, conflicting eyewitness accounts—are then taken as ‘true’, or at least ‘authentic’? In either case, the verse clearly cannot be accepted as a historically reliable source in the modern sense.

Meulengracht Sørensen also cites part of the famous passage from *Porgils saga ok Hafliða* about the wedding at Reykjahólar, in which a saga

⁹⁸ Meulengracht Sørensen (2001: 176).

⁹⁹ “Then some of them said that it was silly that they did not all have a single narrative about those important events. And so it happened that they agreed that Jarl Rognvaldr should decide, and they would afterwards all support what he said” (Finnbogi Guðmundsson, ed. 1965: 227; Hermann Pálsson and Edwards, trans. 1982: 158).

is recited including poems by the current narrator, but is nevertheless called ‘true’.¹⁰⁰

Þat er í frásögn haft, er nú mæla margir í móti ok látask eigi vitat hafa, því at margir ganga duldir ins sanna ok hyggja þat satt, er skrökkvat er, en logit þat, er satt er. Hrólfr af Skálmarnesi sagði sögu frá Hrøngviði víkingi ok frá Óláfi liðmannakonungi ok haugbroti Þráins berserks ok Hrómundi Gripssyni, ok margar visur með. En þessari sögu var skemt Sverri konungi, ok kallaði hann slíkar lygisögur skemtiligastar. Ok þó kunnu menn at telja ættir sínar til Hrómundar Gripssonar. Þessa sögu hafði Hrólfr sjálf samansetta. Ingimundr prestr sagði sögu Orms Barreyarskálds ok visur margar ok flokk góðan við enda sögunnar, er Ingimundr hafði ortan, ok hafa þó margir fróðir menn þessa sögu fyrir satt.¹⁰¹

This brief passage (of which Meulengracht Sørensen cites only the last sentence) appears to be evidence of disagreement as to what can actually be considered authentic or not. Sverrir thinks the stories are lies; the saga author appears to counter this by claiming that many present can trace their lineage back to a saga-protagonist. It is possible, of course, that what the saga author does here is acknowledge that the saga might not be absolutely true, though it was about a historical personage. At the end of the passage, we hear that Ingimundr narrates a saga that all agree is ‘true’; but he includes verses that he himself has composed. Are the verses, then, also supposed to be thought of as ‘true’? Or is the remark that “margir fróðir menn [hafa] þessa sögu fyrir satt” (“many wise men believe that this saga is true”) intended to suggest that even “fróðir menn” can be gullible? As we saw, the prologue to the *Separate saga* also claims to defer to the judgement of “fróðir menn”; the status of such men, and of their judgement, seems to me to be seriously questionable from the point of view of modern scholarship and its quest for facts, but one should consider more

¹⁰⁰ On this passage, cf. Danielsson (2002a, 233–5); Foote (1984d); Jesch (1984); O’Donoghue (2005, 15).

¹⁰¹ “Many now contradict what is said in the story, and declare that they had no knowledge of it, for many are unknowing of the truth and think that that is true, which is made up, and that is invented, which is true. Hrólfr of Skálmarnes narrated the saga of Hrøngviðr the viking and Óláfr liðmannakonungr [an epithet of Óláfr Haraldsson] and how Þráinn the berserker broke the cairn, and the saga of Hrómundr Gripsson, and he recited many verses as well. But this saga was performed for King Sverrir, and he called them the most amusing lying tales. However, men knew to recite their genealogies back to Hrómundr Gripsson. Hrólfr himself had composed this saga. Ingimundr the priest narrated the saga of Ormr Barreyarskáld and many verses and a good flokk at the end of the saga, which Ingimundr had composed, and many wise men believe that this saga is true” (Brown, ed. 1952: 17–18; McGrew and Thomas, trans. 1970–4, ii: 43–4).

seriously what sort of claim to wisdom such informants had, how it was legitimated, and how their wisdom related to contemporary concepts of truth and authenticity. At any rate, the passage seems to indicate that saga narratives, including verse, were orally performed, and could include verse composed by the current narrators; and that this whole narrative could be thought of as ‘true’. Meulengracht Sørensen believes that “the only acceptable solution to the problem of ‘spurious’ stanzas is that the audience did not consider it fraudulent to compose stanzas in the name of a skald from a past era”.¹⁰² Since he is discussing the *Íslendingasögur*, he believes that the narratives were not accorded any historical truth, but concedes also that medieval Icelanders might have had a different understanding of ‘authenticity’ from ours.

These examples from the sagas of Icelanders might demonstrate that verse could be considered authoritative without having to be what we would consider authentic (thus establishing a different set of values regarding historical truth). Meulengracht Sørensen applies his arguments only to the *Íslendingasögur*, whose standards of authenticity he wishes explicitly to distinguish from those in *Hkr*, which he believes are enunciated in *Hkr*’s prologue—but the *Hkr*-author does not follow his own rules, and his theory contradicts itself. While his statements about the value of eyewitness accounts seem to assert a notion of authenticity similar to ours, his belief that verse is reliable if it is correctly recited and interpreted, whether it is old or new, seems to be closer to the perspective of *Orkneyinga saga* and *Borgils saga*, summed up by Meulengracht Sørensen thus: “the decisive factor was that the stanza was of such a kind that it *could* have been composed by a skald in the past [...] [The objective was] to create a continuity back into the past”.¹⁰³ Thus the presentation of verses seems to accord with the notion of ‘cultural memory’, elucidated by Pernille Hermann in a recent paper, drawing on the earlier work of Jan Assmann: cultural memory, as opposed to a historical tradition, is here understood as a means of interpreting and selectively presenting the past, normally for the purposes of the present, whereas a tradition aims to preserve narratives in as unchanged as possible.¹⁰⁴ Assmann notes that such a tradition tends to become blurred in its contours within three generations, as the living witnesses die out; thus aspects of tradition that survive

¹⁰² Meulengracht Sørensen (2001: 188).

¹⁰³ Meulengracht Sørensen (2001: 189; emphasis in the original).

¹⁰⁴ Hermann (2009); Assmann (1992).

may be transformed into cultural memory, and there can be an overlap and blurring of boundaries between the more factual kind of historical transmission, and something that is considered ‘authentic’, but might not be factual in the modern sense.¹⁰⁵

It seems to be precisely this sort of contradiction that is embodied in the *Hkr*-prologues: since the *Hkr*-author does enunciate some belief in the value of contemporary verse by eyewitnesses, it is clear that (for this author at least) there was indeed also a notion of authenticity more rigid and akin to ours than what Meulengracht Sørensen proposes for the *Íslendingasögur*. Meulengracht Sørensen believes that the theory expounded in *Hkr* cannot be extrapolated to the sagas of Icelanders; I have argued above, however, that it does not truly describe the procedures followed in the kings’ sagas, even in *Hkr*. Meulengracht Sørensen is right, I believe, in proposing that the concept of authenticity in medieval Iceland was different from ours, but this insight applies as much to the kings’ sagas as to the sagas of Icelanders; there is no other way to explain the contradictions in *Hkr*. But *Hkr*’s articulation of an explicit theory of the value of eyewitness accounts, despite the author’s own disregard of it in practice, and what seems to be his contradiction of it elsewhere in the prologue, presents us with a problem, which is not solved by glossing it over. The only possible resolution of this would be to disregard the statements regarding eyewitness accounts, and give credit only to the fact that the verse must be “rétt kveðit” and “skynsamliga upp tekin”; but this leaves us only with ‘good’ and ‘properly understood’ verse as a historical source, not contemporary historical witnesses. I do not claim to be able to solve this problem here, but it seems to me that an argument for different standards of authenticity in different genres is not necessarily plausible, and reflects more modern preoccupations with the differences between ‘historical’ and ‘fictional’ narratives; certainly, a concept of more rigorous standards of authenticity in the kings’ sagas (or at least in *Hkr*) should not and cannot, as I hope to have demonstrated, be grounded on *Hkr*’s prologues or practice.

We should note here also Nancy Partner’s comment—regarding Anglo-Norman historians (and we will see in the next chapter that Norse histories seem to have been greatly influenced by Anglo-Norman traditions)—that

¹⁰⁵ For a concrete example of such transformations taking place in heroic legends (preserved in Scandinavia as well), cf. Ghosh (2007, esp. 243–52); for a further explication of Assmann’s theories in the context of Old Norse literature, see, apart from Hermann (2009), Uecker (2005).

historians imitated the writing of fiction in terms of style, structure and the way they used their judgement and skill to shape their narratives from their sources; the only difference was that their narratives were held to be 'true'.¹⁰⁶ Similarly, Hans-Werner Goetz points out that although medieval historians were well aware of a difference between what they considered true history and fiction, using terms like 'res gestae', 'historia' or 'factum' for the former, and differentiating it from 'fabula' or 'fictum', their notions of what was admissible as authentic interpretation of the past were very different from the concepts of modern historians; what we think of as the fictional aspects of medieval histories stem from a different way of interpreting the past, and of understanding truth and authenticity.¹⁰⁷ In Hermann's words, "sharp distinctions between factuality and invention—or between history and fiction—were not typical [...] the ways medieval authors referred to the past and the interplay between various forms of memory they allowed may actually challenge modern attempts to classify medieval texts according to the dichotomy between history and fiction".¹⁰⁸ The task is, then, to try and understand as best we can what the notion of truth for a particular type of text was held to be by its author and his audience; and the extent to which authorial intervention and literary creativity were thought to be permissible in crafting a narrative without being seen as turning history into fiction. But even failing this (for it is certainly not easy to place ourselves in the minds of medieval historians), we should at least not impute to our sources, operating with what are clearly concepts different from ours, our own notions of history and fiction.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ Partner (1977: 194–6).

¹⁰⁷ Goetz (2003: 234–8; 242); similarly Sverrir Tómasson (1988: 189–94; 245–60).

¹⁰⁸ Hermann (2009: 300).

¹⁰⁹ The problems raised by the concepts—medieval and modern—of 'history' and 'fiction' are too convoluted to be entered into in more detail here. There is a vast body of scholarship concerning continental, and to a lesser degree, British historiography and literature from the middle ages (primarily concerned with the distinctions regarding authenticity made between chronicles, romances, and heroic epics), but relatively little that deals with these questions as they arise with regard to the kings' sagas; Scandinavianists have focused on the *Íslendingasögur* and on establishing the extent to which they represent—in modern terms—some sort of historical reality, but have been less concerned with elucidating the medieval concepts of history, fiction, and truth, and how these apply across various genres. On saga material, see the summary of earlier scholarship in Phelpstead (2007: 53–9), and the stimulating and sensible essay by Bibire (2007); in addition, cf. Bandle (1993); Kári Gíslason (2006); Paul (1982); Sverrir Tómasson (1988: 189–94; 245–60); Wolf (2002). On the possibility of applying the concept of 'cultural memory' to Icelandic narrative traditions of the past, cf. Glauser (2000; 2007: 18–26), Hermann (2009), and Uecker (2005), with further references; these scholars also argue that the modern dichotomy between history and fiction might not be appropriate for medieval narratives. For comparanda and

If we accept the inherently problematic nature of skaldic verse as a historical source, we are faced with the fact that we have no reliable contemporary records for Scandinavian history before the twelfth century: to be sure, something in the verse most likely goes back to the time it tells of, and something in the verse must provide historical fact—but we cannot assess what is reliable, and what is not. Only a thorough examination of the textual transmission could potentially reveal what might be the oldest written version of the poems, and perhaps even whether extant records might be traced back to earlier, lost, written versions. But even this can never reach beyond the written record to the original oral context of the verses, and is thus unlikely to take us beyond the mid-twelfth century at the earliest; we should also note that later written versions might derive from oral or written variants potentially as old, and as authentic, as the oldest traceable written version (perhaps even older). We thus need to refocus our attention to the verses within their prose context (in which too the variations must be thoroughly examined!), to ask how the authors of the prose understood the verse, and what the possibilities are that their comprehension and explanation of the verse, and perhaps even the very prose context in which it is embedded, might reach back in time to approach the age of the poets themselves.

Understanding the relationship of prose to poetry, and trying to ascertain how far back in history the pairing of historical prose narrative with verse goes, is actually perhaps more crucial than examining the textual variants of the poems: skaldic verse notoriously has little real content, and for the most part must be received along with some kind of explanatory narrative to function as a historical source. For example, the strophe of *Glymdrápa* cited above can only really say that a king fought somewhere near the sea, and that “skotir” fled; neither in this stanza nor elsewhere in the poem, as it is cited in *Hkr*, is Haraldr named (he is only named in

the broader context of research on history, fiction and the uses of the past in medieval Europe, cf. Duggan (1986), and Fleischman (1983) (both on epic and romance traditions in the Romance languages); Goetz (1999: 134–59; 2003: 225–52; 2006), and Partner (1977: 183–211) (both on Latin historiography, from Germany, France and Norman England); Johanek (1987; 2002) (on Arthurian traditions and Latin and vernacular chronicles); Green (2002a; 2002c), Haug (1997; 2002; 2003), and Müller (2004) (on epic and romance in French and German); and see also Reichl (2000), for a very stimulating discussion on history, fiction and authenticity in the context of heroic poetry and epic and its transformation from oral to written tradition. Alastair Matthews (forthcoming) presents a very useful case study of one vernacular verse chronicle from twelfth-century Germany, the *Kaiserchronik*, and its location in the spheres of history and fiction against the context of other vernacular and Latin works from both ends of the spectrum.

a half-stanza that occurs in *Flateyjarbók*); nor is the subject called “son of Hálfðan” or anything else that could provide definite identification; nor is there any clear geographical setting. The identification of the king in question with Haraldr and the location of his battles are therefore derived only from the accompanying prose, which we have no independent means of verifying, and which we have no clear reason to believe was composed contemporaneously with the verse.

A comparison with a work of panegyric poetry from another tradition reinforces this point: the Old High German *Ludwigslied*¹¹⁰ was composed in the late ninth century, and tells the story of a certain young, parentless king called Ludwig, and his battles against northern warriors. This is already more information than is provided by most skaldic verse in the kings’ sagas; but since the *Ludwigslied* lacks any explanatory context, it is not entirely clear who the king referred to is. A consensus has been reached about the poem’s historical context, but this is possible only because the manuscript itself can be dated to the late ninth century, the time in which the poem is supposed to have been written, and because of the wealth of other contemporary historical information for the period available from a variety of sources.¹¹¹

Such a situation does not obtain for Scandinavia: there are no contemporary manuscripts for any of the verse before the twelfth century, and little in the way of independent contemporary historical reportage. We should note that like Ludwig in Francia, Haraldr and Óláfr were extremely common names in the north, so a name (itself often absent in the verse) would not really inform us whom the poem is about; nicknames are also not necessarily present in the verse, and thus also not always reliable. The case of the two most famous Haraldrs—Haraldr hárfagri Hálfðanarson, the supposed unifier of Norway in the late ninth century, and Haraldr harðráði Sigurðarson, who lived in the mid-eleventh century—is an excellent example.¹¹² While the latter Haraldr is relatively well-attested in con-

¹¹⁰ Braune and Ebbinghaus (eds 1994).

¹¹¹ A recent summary of the issues is in Green (2002b); for more detail, see the stimulating studies of Yeandle (1989), and Fouracre (1989); a useful examination of the genre of the poem in a comparative context, with a consideration of skaldic poetry, is in Beck (1974). For introductions to the poem: Bostock (1976: 235–48; a translation is included here); Haubrichs (1995: 137–46).

¹¹² The confusions of the two Haraldrs is discussed by Jesch (1996: 139–44; note that Jesch surprisingly ignores the testimony of Ari), and Sverrir Jakobsson (2002: 217–19; 225), whom my account follows; I am preparing a separate paper to address the issues in more detail. On nicknames in saga literature more generally, see Whaley (1993b); in contrast to Jesch,

temporary sources, his earlier namesake remains a shadowy figure, known only from much later writings; it seems to be impossible to determine how much of what is attributed to him really has anything to do with a real historical figure. A number of scholars have recently suggested that the material accruing around him has little or no basis in fact, and is a product of a much later creation of legend, tied to contemporary political situations in the twelfth century. Krag has argued that the Norwegian kings' claim to legitimacy was rooted in the fact that Norway was purported (in the extant and late histories) to have been the 'oðal', or family property, of Haraldr and thus his descendants, but in Krag's view, this is a retrospective claim, having little to do with the realities of Haraldr's reign.¹¹³ Krag, and more recently Pesch and Sverrir Jakobsson, have also argued that neither Haraldr nor his supposed father Hálfðan svarti were actually from Vestfold; this geographical location also has more to do with the situation in Norway from the mid-twelfth century onwards than the period c.900.¹¹⁴ Approaching the problems from an archaeological perspective, Pesch presents a thorough analysis of all that is known about Hálfðan svarti, concluding that—as with *Ynglingatal* and *Ynglinga saga*—there is little archaeological information to support the saga narratives, which are in themselves not consistent with each other; she argues furthermore that if there was a Hálfðan as a predecessor to Haraldr hárfagri, he may not have had the nickname of 'svarti'; he was not a 'Yngling'; he did not rule in Vestfold; he was not buried in four different places; and he probably did not father Haraldr. She suggests that the origins of the narratives about Hálfðan and the Ynglingar were in a saga about Haraldr, from which a tale about his father developed, which was then attached both to Vestfold and to the Swedish Ynglings, in an effort to create a seamless genealogy for Haraldr hárfagri, who had such an important role in Norwegian and Icelandic traditions about their early history. Taking these suggestions further, Sverrir Jakobsson presents an even more critical view: beginning his argument with the fact that there are *no* contemporary sources (even from outside Scandinavia) on Haraldr, he suggests that Haraldr is perhaps best seen as a legendary figure; the sources provide no solid evidence that we could connect to any real historical personage.

Whaley believes that 'hárfagri' was indeed originally applied to Haraldr Hálfðanarson, and erroneously applied to Haraldr Sigurðarson in the foreign sources (122–3).

¹¹³ Krag (1989). This argument elaborated on further by Krag (2002) in response to the objections of Knut Dørum (2001).

¹¹⁴ Krag (1990); Pesch (1997: 92–4); Sverrir Jakobsson (2002).

These theses are supported by the difficulties surrounding Haraldr's nickname. As Sverrir, most recently, has pointed out, there is no attestation of any king called 'hárfagri' before the eleventh century in a reliably datable source;¹¹⁵ and all the earliest written evidence for the use of this epithet for a king of Norway is non-Scandinavian. A Haraldr hárfagri occurs in a number of Anglo-Norman sources and in MS D of the ASC, in all of which, however, this epithet is applied to Haraldr (harðráði) Sigurðarson; perhaps more importantly, Marianus Scotus also refers to Haraldr Sigurðarson as 'hárfagri' in his chronicle, thought to have been composed in 1076, thus providing a near-contemporary source, and certainly the earliest extant evidence of this usage. The date of MS D of the ASC is difficult to determine, but it has been suggested that this part was written in the years 1080–1100, and certainly before 1120,¹¹⁶ making it possibly a near-contemporary source and earlier than all written Scandinavian accounts; Orderic's revision of William of Jumièges's *Gesta Normannorum ducum* dates from c.1095–c.1113,¹¹⁷ also earlier than the first Scandinavian source; and William of Malmesbury's *Gesta regum Anglorum* was composed between 1120 and 1127, making it contemporary to the the earliest Scandinavian usage of this term.¹¹⁸

The earliest securely datable Scandinavian source to use this term for Haraldr Hálfðanarson is Ari's *Ísl*, composed 1125–33.¹¹⁹ According to Judith

¹¹⁵ Sverrir Jakobsson (2002: 218).

¹¹⁶ Dumville (1983: 32–8).

¹¹⁷ Van Houts (ed. and trans. 1992–5, i: lxxviii).

¹¹⁸ On Marianus, see Darlington, McGurk and Bray (eds and trans. 1996: xviii–xix). The relevant texts and their dates are Marianus Scotus (c.1076; Pertz, ed. 1844: 559: "Araldus autem, qui et Arbach vocabatur"; another manuscript has "Haraldus Harfager autem"); the *Gesta Normannorum ducum* (c.1095–c.1113; Van Houts, ed. and trans. 1992–5, ii: 162: "Heraldum Herfagam"); William of Malmesbury (c.1120–7; Mynors, Thomson and Winterbottom, eds and trans. 1998: 420: "Haroldo Haruagrae"); John of Worcester (c.1128–40; Darlington, McGurk and Bray, eds and trans. 1998: 602: "Haroldus Haruagra"); Orderic Vitalis (c.1140; Chibnall, ed. and trans. 1968–80, ii: 142–3: "Heraldum regem Nortwigenarum qui Harafagh cognominatur"). Two much later works, the *Hyde Chronicle* (Edwards, ed. 1866: 292: "Haroldum, cognomento Hervard"), and the *Chronicle of Man* (Munch, ed. 1860: 3: "Haraldus Harphagre; Haraldus Harfager") also call Haraldr Sigurðarson 'fair-haired'. The same identification occurs in two vernacular sources, the ASC, MS D (c.1080–1100; Cubbin, ed. 1996: s.a. 1066: "Harold Harfagera"); and Gaimar's French verse history (1138–9; Short, ed. and trans. 2009: 5197: "Harald Harfage"). The Middle Welsh *Historia Gruffudd vab Kenan*, based on a Latin text dating to some point between 1137 and c.1150 (though only preserved in a very late manuscript), also identifies Haraldr Sigurðarson as "Harfagy" (Evans, ed. and trans. 1990: 55; 56 (the Welsh text); Russell, ed. and trans. 2005: 54–7 (the Latin text)). Gade (2004: 217, n. 29) records the use of the term in the English and Norman sources, but believes that they are here in error.

¹¹⁹ *Ísl*: 3–5 (Grønlie trans. 2006: 2–4); cited below at chapter three, n. 93.

Jesch, “there are no indubitably early instances of ‘hárfagri’ applied to the first Haraldr”.¹²⁰ The only instance of this epithet being applied to him in a poem with a good claim to being contemporary occurs in Þorbjörn hornklofi’s *Haraldskvæði*,¹²¹ but “the term *hárfagri* occurs in a stanza that is preserved only in *Fagrskinna*, and in only one of the two main manuscripts of that text”;¹²² Jesch notes furthermore that the variant ‘afarauðga’ (also preserved in one manuscript) is metrically better. The same poem also contains a reference to Haraldr as being called ‘lúfa’, a term that is taken to mean ‘shock-haired’,¹²³ and is thought to be an antecedent of the nickname ‘hárfagri’, occurring also in prose accounts (though less frequently than ‘hárfagri’; note, though, that another verse also fragmentarily preserved only in one late manuscript and ascribed to Þorbjörn uses both ‘hárfagri’ and ‘lúfa’ to describe Haraldr).¹²⁴ Even Þorbjörn’s poem is, in any case, only preserved in thirteenth-century manuscripts. Is it not possible, therefore, that the earlier non-native sources are actually more reliable than the later Scandinavian works? Jesch is inclined to think so, feeling that ‘hárfagri’ was originally an epithet for Haraldr Sigurðarson, and was transferred to Haraldr Hálfðanarson in the early twelfth century.¹²⁵ Certainly, the normal rule of thumb for most historical scholarship would be to accept the evidence of earlier over later sources unless there are very good reasons not to do so; given the problems involved with dating skaldic verse, the fact that Haraldr Sigurðarson had a role to play in English politics (and thus the English historians might reasonably be expected to be well-informed), and the close links between England, Normandy and Norway (discussed in the following chapter), such reasons do not seem to apply here.¹²⁶

¹²⁰ Jesch (1996: 143).

¹²¹ *Fsk*: 59, v. 1.

¹²² Jesch (1996: 144).

¹²³ *Fsk*: 68, v. 21.

¹²⁴ The epithet is also applied in a poem ascribed to Jörunn skáldmær in *Hkr* (I: v. 59), but Fidjestøl has argued that this was in fact most likely composed in the mid-twelfth century, and was thus not contemporary (1982: 180–1); practically nothing is known about this poet.

¹²⁵ Jesch (1996: 144).

¹²⁶ For a further example of a poem about one king apparently being transferred to another, cf. the poem *Darraðarljóð*, preserved only in *Njáls saga*, apparently about the battle of Clontarf between Sigtryggr silkiskegg and the Irish in 1014, but thought by modern scholars as more probably relating to an earlier battle between Sigtryggr Sigtryggsson (‘caoch’ or ‘caech’ is the commonly applied nickname) and the Irish king Niall Glundubh in 919. For the poem in its context, see *Njáls saga*, chap. 157 (Einar Ól. Sveinsson, ed. 1954: 448–60; Cook, trans. 2001: 301–8); it is also edited and discussed in Poole (1991: 116–56), and

The complications regarding these two Haralds and their nicknames do not, of course, have quite the same value as would conflicting accounts in native Scandinavian sources mixing up the two kings; but we should nevertheless, I suggest, be sceptical about the information—even in the verse—that the Norse sources provide: after all, if the name could be transferred, so surely could reports of deeds attached to that name. We have been content to follow the saga writers' assignment of person to poem; it is, however, hardly unknown for narratives concerning one person to be transferred to another—even in written traditions—and thus our knowledge of the history of this period rests on more shaky ground than we normally care to admit.¹²⁷

The Relationship of Verse and Prose

Because of the relative lack of information contained in the verses themselves, while examining variant texts of the poems can change our image of the stability of the sources, the notions we formulate, both about Scandinavian history and about the historical consciousness of the poets or saga-writers, depend in large part on our understanding of the function, origin and authenticity of the prosimetrum in the saga texts.¹²⁸ Siegfried

is analysed more recently, in the context of an examination of why and how skaldic verse relating to York and Dublin did or did not survive, by Townend (2003: 55–7; 69).

¹²⁷ I differ here from Jesch (2004a; 2005), who believes that there is little difference in character between the historical record of skaldic verse and that of a work such as the ASC. While it is true that skaldic verse did have an original function of preserving history for posterity, and was a contemporary source, and it is also true that the individual entries of the ASC do not always contain much more information than a verse of a skaldic poem, each entry in the ASC is nevertheless a part of a larger contemporaneously written context, within which plenty of extra information is contained, which provides sufficient explanation for most entries. In addition, the actors are normally named, or at least their position (ealdorman of x; earl of y) is mentioned directly, not solely in poetic circumlocutions. Each entry, moreover, is dated. In the skaldic poems, however, the verse almost invariably requires some sort of prose context to make it comprehensible, and was ostensibly composed separately from the surrounding prose; it is not, therefore, quite the same level of historical narrative. However, see Jesch (2005) for some examples of skaldic poems that are more easily comprehensible without any gloss; even these poems, though, when juxtaposed with the entries from the ASC Jesch cites (in 2004a), seem to me to have a rather different character. Furthermore, Jesch holds to the view that skaldic verse was an oral form of creating a 'fixed' text; the possibility of variability, or of later composition of verse in an 'antique' style, is not entertained.

¹²⁸ I leave aside here the question of whether or not the authors of the Latin synoptics used skaldic verse as a source; despite the arguments of Bjarni Guðnason (1977), Gudrun Lange (1989), and Else Mundal (2000), there is no real evidence providing firm associations between any of the Latin texts and any known skaldic verse. That Theodoricus and Saxo

Beyschlag has argued many times that the poems were transmitted along with a stable *Begleitprosa* that explained the verse; by the time of the written record, this accompanying prose was perhaps somewhat contaminated, but nevertheless for the most part reliable.¹²⁹ Such a theory could account for the differences between, for example, the portions of *Ynglinga saga* and *Ynglingatal* cited above: the prose says more, but it originated along with the verse as a means of providing the background information. While this theory has not been entirely accepted, it has also not been completely rejected; for the most part, scholars work with the (often un-stated) assumption that some explanatory prose was attached to the verse, though the nature of this prose was, for most scholars, less stable than Beyschlag believes.¹³⁰

Before entering into the issues involved with the question of *Begleitprosa*, I wish to raise a fundamental one relating to it: why would there be any need, in the original context of the verse, for any explanations? If we accept the manner in which they are presented, the skaldic poems used as historical sources by the authors of the compendia were, for the most part, clearly composed within the context of a court performance (I use the term 'court' broadly here, to encompass the social and political circle of the ruler), as panegyric poetry praising the recent deeds of a ruler/warrior, lamenting his death, or in some cases, providing admonishment or advice.¹³¹ In all these cases, the context of the verse would have been

state that Icelanders preserve history in verse does not tell us when or whether such verse was used by either author. Common information contained in *HN*, *HARN* and *Ágrip*, and in the poems, does not indicate a common (verse) source for the three prose histories; the information may have been derived from oral or written prose traditions, not just from oral or written verse, and the verse might itself have been influenced by prose narratives. There is, in any case, far too little in the way of common detail to be able to demonstrate that any particular verse was a source for anything in the synoptics. Similar caveats, with regard to Saxo, also apply to Bjarni Guðnason (1981).

¹²⁹ Beyschlag (1950; 1953; 1981); given his perspective, it is odd indeed that Beyschlag gives *Msk* little attention in any of his works.

¹³⁰ See, for example, the firm opposition to Beyschlag's views in Krag (1991: 93–5; Krag 1998), and contrast it with the general acceptance in Danielsson (2002b: 379–83), though Danielsson would not be as stringent about the stability of the *Begleitprosa* as Beyschlag.

¹³¹ I do not include here verses that are embedded within the narrative; such verses are, in any case, only a small percentage, and are discussed separately below. It would, of course, be possible to take an attitude of extreme scepticism and suggest that the poems were not in fact intended for public performance as panegyrics, and/or there were no contemporaneously composed poems; this would, I think, be taking things too far, given that panegyric poetry appears to have existed in all oral cultures we know of. For some useful recent theoretical considerations regarding the performance of skaldic verse and the evidence for such performance, see Würth (2007).

known to the audience, thus eliminating the need for explanatory prose. Thus even if we accept that some such prose was transmitted along with the verse, we must assume that it came into being already at some remove from the original context, and perhaps even a generation away from the events recorded in the verse. This being the case, how much faith should we have in the reliability even of such possibly ancient, orally transmitted explanatory prose? Furthermore, given the lack of evidence, it is hard to agree with Beyschlag's proposition that the prose contained a largely stable and fixed core; it definitely seems plausible that some sort of narrative might have built up around the verse, but this was most likely informal and extremely variable, and its extent and content must have depended on the context of transmission of the verses—about which very little is known indeed. The prose authors rarely cite long poems fully, and the prose passages inserted for the sake of providing context often differ between the various compendia; this is further evidence that even the explanatory matter supposedly transmitted along with the poems was itself variable, as was the way in which prose composers interpreted the poems.¹³²

Krag (largely expanding on evidence already provided by Sigfús Blöndal and Benedikt Benedikz) has pointed out that the verses relating to Haraldr Sigurðarson's life in Byzantium are not reliable historical sources, and are not always correctly explained by the saga authors.¹³³ Moreover, many events described in the prose are not corroborated by the verse, but are probably derived from non-native sources. For example, when the verse states that Haraldr fought against a "jöfurr Affrika" ("prince of Africa"), *Msk* and *Fsk* interpret this as meaning that Haraldr fought in Africa, whereas he actually probably fought against a Saracen king from Africa, but in Sicily.¹³⁴

¹³² For a careful examination of the presentation of long poems, with extensive examples from the kings' sagas, see Poole (1991); on the problems involved with assessing when a verse is a part of a longer poem, and on the reliability of the attributions of verses, see also Fidjestøl (1982, esp. 61–80; 87–178).

¹³³ Krag (1998); this should be supplemented by Sigfús Blöndal and Benedikt Benedikz (1978: 54–102); Ellis Davidson (1976: 207–29); White (1999; 2005).

¹³⁴ *Msk*: 64 (*MskAG*: 135–6): "Hann [sc. Haraldr] lagde nu með herinn uestr j Affrika og elfdiz þadan miog at fiolmenne j vellde þui er þar liggir [...] Nordbrigt [= Haraldr; cf. *Msk*: 60 (*MskAG*: 132): "Haralld[r] er kalladizt Norbrigt ("Haraldr, who called himself Norbrigt")]] dualdiz marga uetr j Affrika ok feck þar mikid gull og marga dyrgripe" ("He set out with his army westwards for Africa, gathered a great multitude of men in the dominion that is in Africa [...] Nordbrigt stayed many years in Africa and acquired much gold and many treasures there") (this passage, with the accompanying verse, is repeated almost verbatim

When the verse states that Haraldr went against the “frið Frakka” or went through the lands of the “Langbarðar”, the “Frakkar” are almost certainly the French Normans, fighting against the Greeks in the Byzantine province of Longobardia, in southern Italy. *Msk* and *Fsk*, however, understand the Franks as French, and the Lombards as being in northern Italy.¹³⁵ Krag also points out that the prose authors did not know what to make of the epithet “Bolgara brennir” (“burner of Bulgars”), which was, according to Sigfús Blöndal and Benedikt Benedikz, probably a reference to a historical

in *Fsk*: 230, v. 184 (*FskF*: 185); the verse cited with this passage mentions both “serkland” and “sikiley”, but not “Affrika”); cf. also Whaley’s edition of the verse (Gade, ed. and trans. 2009: 113, v. 2); *Fsk*: 231 (*FskF*: 186): “Hann [sc. Haraldr] barðisk við sjálfan konunginn í Affrika ok sigraðisk ok eignaðisk víða hans veldi” (“He fought against the king himself in Africa and was victorious and took possession of a large part of his domain”); the second helming (half-stanza of four lines) of the following verse (v. 186; cf. Whaley’s edition in Gade, ed. and trans. 2009: 114, v. 3): “vasat Affrika jöfri / Ánar mey fyr hǫnum / haglafaldinni at halda / hlýðisamt né lýðum” (“It was not permitted to the ruler or people of Africa to withhold from him Ánar’s hailstone-covered daughter [= earth/land]”). The verse is not in *Msk* or *Hkr*, but both seem to have had access to the information, which *Hkr* resolves, or attempts to, with the following remark (*Hkr* III: 74; *HkrH*: 581): “Lagðisk hann þá með her sinn vestr í Affriká, er Væringjar kalla Serkland” (“Then he set out with his troops westwards for Africa, which the Varangians call the land of the Saracens”). Cf. Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson’s note to v. 81 (*Hkr* III: 75); Sigfús Blöndal and Benedikt Benedikz (1978: 60–2).

¹³⁵ *Msk*: 59 (*MskAG*: 131–2; they give “Frakka” and “óttu” instead of “Frakk” and “otta”, and I have followed this reading): “Og eptir þessa ræðu giorizt hann [sc. Haraldr] ath fara ut j lǫnd og visar so til j kuæde hans sem hann hafde farit med herin austr vm Vindland og so til Saxlandz og allt uestr j Frakland. sem Jllugi quað: Opt geck aa frid Frakka / [...] drottenn minn fyrir ottu. Þadan for hann j Langbardarland og sidan til Romaborgar og eptir þath vt aa Pul og red sier far til skipa og for þadan til Miklagardz” (“And after this talk he prepared to go abroad and there are verses about this in his poem [sc. the poem about him that follows] that he had travelled with his army eastwards through Wendland and then to Saxony and all the way westwards to Frankland, as Illugi said: ‘Often my lord breaks the peace of the Franks before daybreak’. He travelled thence to Lombardy and later to Rome, and after that out to Apulia, where he set out by ship and travelled thence to Constantinople”; for the verse, see also the edition in Gade, ed. and trans. 2009: 284, v. 3). See in this context also the verse from Þjóðólfr Arnórsson’s *Sextsteffa*, recorded in *Hulda* and *Hrokkinskinna*, cited by Andersson and Gade (*MskAG*: 426, n. 7): “sás við lund á landi / Langbarða réð ganga” (translated by Andersson and Gade as “He who advanced in the land of the Lombards [‘við lund’?]”); Andy Orchard, in a personal communication in 2008, suggested that “við lund” might be translated as “with purpose”, and it is so translated in her edition by Diana Whaley (Gade, ed. and trans. 2009: 117). *Hkr* understands things correctly regarding Haraldr’s eastern journeys, omitting the verse and stating: “Haraldr dvalðisk í Garðaríki nǫkkura vetr ok fór víða um Austrveg” (*Hkr* III: 70; *HkrH*: 578: “Haraldr stayed in Russia for some years and travelled widely in the east”); cf. Sigfús Blöndal and Benedikt Benedikz (1978: 56; 70).

raid against the Bulgarians.¹³⁶ Given that Þjóðólfr Arnórsson's *Sexsteffa*,¹³⁷ from which much of the information in the compendia was derived, was itself composed many years after Haraldr's return from the east, Krag doubts the veracity of the verse as a historical source; and the information that Haraldr conquered Jerusalem, also in a poem not by an eyewitness, but apparently derived from Haraldr's own report, is obviously false.¹³⁸ In this last case, it is interesting that *Hkr*'s author chooses to explain a relatively simple verse (contrary to his normal practice where the verse is simply cited as a source); perhaps he was himself aware of how this stanza might have provided unlikely information, and in any case went against his own principles (if he also composed the *Separate saga*) of believing only verse composed by people who were present? (That Stúfr was apparently blind means that he would have to have received information from someone else, but the fact that the informant is here not an eyewitness but the principal protagonist is surely a cause to doubt the reliability of the source). There was indeed an embassy to Jerusalem, which may have included Varangians,¹³⁹ and thus the account might not be totally unhistorical (Haraldr may have gone to Jerusalem)—but Haraldr certainly did not conquer the city! We have here an excellent example of how, precisely because the verse was intended as praise, and was based on information received from the person being praised, and probably recited before at least some of the actors in the events narrated by the poet, the story can-

¹³⁶ *Hkr* III: 68, v. 76 (*HkrH*: 577); cf. Sigfús Blöndal and Benedikt Benediktz (1978: 74). The phrase occurs in the first helming of the verse, which is only in *Hkr*. The prose does not comment on the phrase at any point, nor are Bulgarians mentioned elsewhere in this saga. As Whaley suggests in her edition (Gade, ed. and trans. 2009: 113), Haraldr might well have participated in campaigns against Bulgars while in Byzantine service, and the nickname itself might have been derived from that of a Greek emperor, Basil II Bulgaroctonus ("slaughterer of Bulgars").

¹³⁷ Gade (ed. and trans. 2009: 108–47).

¹³⁸ *Hkr* III: 83–4; v. 84 (*HkrH*: 586): "En hvar sem hann fór um Jórslalaland, váru allar borgir ok kastalar gefnir í vald hans. Svá segir Stúfr skáld, er heyrð hafði konunginn sjálfan frá þessum tíðendum segja: Fór ofrhugi enn øfri / eggdjarfr und sik leggja, / [...] Jórslali ór Girkjum. / Ok með ærnu ríki / óbrunnin kom gunnar / heimil jorð und herði [...] Hér segir frá því, at þetta land kom óbrunnit ok óherjat í vald Haralds" ("And wherever he travelled in Palestine all fortified places and castles were given into his power. Thus says the skald Stúfr, who heard the king himself speak of these events: The very reckless, sword-bold one set out from the Greeks to subjugate Jerusalem to himself. And his power was sufficient that the land came to the hardener of battle [= warrior] as was his due, unburned [...] Here it is told that the land came into Haraldr's power without burning and harrying"). Cf. 84, v. 85 (*HkrH*: 587); Gade (ed. and trans. 2009: 352–4, vv. 2–3). Almost identical accounts (including the verse) are provided by *Fsk*: 233 (*FskF*: 187–8), and *Msk*: 78–9 (*MskAG*: 144).

¹³⁹ Sigfús Blöndal and Benedikt Benediktz (1978: 65).

not be trusted; Haraldr would doubtless have been pleased to portray himself as the conqueror of the Holy Land, and it would not be surprising that poetry composed in his memory and honour should not be entirely reliable as a source of fact.

Because of the inaccuracies in understanding or interpreting the poetry, Krag concludes that if there had been any explanatory prose (which he does not deny), it had been lost or completely garbled by the time the compendia were composed, and the verses were not actually sources for the histories, but rather decoration, pegs on which the writers could hang their stories. Even though we could counter Krag by pointing to many instances where verse and prose seem to match, once the door of doubt is open, we can never be certain whether the prose matches the verse because it, like the verse, is ancient and authentic, or whether it has been composed to explain the verse, or whether, indeed, the verse itself might have been adapted to fit the prose composed by the saga author.

We have already noted examples of debatable and/or differing interpretations of the verse in the very prose that the verse is supposed to authenticate.¹⁴⁰ Given that we know, from some cases where it is possible to check against other sources, that authors might present matching prose and verse not because both are authentically contemporary sources for the events they tell of, but because they composed a narrative to explain cogently the verse, we should be wary of trusting the concord of verse and prose even when we cannot prove its lack of authenticity. Moreover, we should also note that a narrative in which verse and prose might appear to

¹⁴⁰ Further examples are given by Jesch (1994, with reference to *Hkr's Magnúss saga ins goða*, in particular the verse and prose at *Hkr* III: 4–7 (*HkrH*: 538–40); and *Hkr* III: 13–20 (*HkrH*: 543–8)): *Hkr's* contextualisation of Sigvatr's poem on Ástriðr Óláfsdóttir might not have understood the poem properly; O'Donoghue (2005: 48–51, with reference to *Hkr* II: 12 (*HkrH*: 250), and *Ólhelg* 42–3): *Hkr* and *Ólhelg* disagree in their interpretation Sigvatr's *Víkingarvísur*, with *Hkr's* information perhaps making more sense, but not actually corroborated by the verse (and cf. O'Donoghue 2005: 46–55 for discussion of further discrepancies between the ways in which this poem is used in its various prose contexts); O'Donoghue (2005: 30–4, with reference to *Ágrip*: 4–5 (Driscoll, ed. and trans. 1995: 3–5)): the *Ágrip*-author misunderstood an otherwise unknown verse and composed an explanation for it; Poole (1991: 163–9, with reference to *Hkr* I: 131–3, vv. 53–6 (*HkrH*: 83–5)): *Hkr* possibly distorts the prose context of the Torf-Einarr poems, as well as reordering the verses; Whaley (1987: 333, with reference to *Hkr* III: 370–2 (*HkrH*: 787–8)): although *Hkr's* author manifestly knew Einarr Skúlason's *Geisli* (Chase, ed. and trans. 2005; the text and translation, but not the commentary and much of the apparatus, are reproduced in Clunies Ross, ed. and trans. 2007: 5–65), he knowingly contradicts its chronology in *Hkr*, and also his own chronology in the *Separate saga*; cf. also Krag (1991: 99–143) on discrepancies between *Ynglingatal* and *Ynglinga saga*.

fit together could also be deceptive; apart from the fact that the harmony might date back to a very early borrowing from foreign oral or written tradition (thus rendering even the putatively original *Begleitprosa*-plus-verse useless as historical record), even the verse used need not have been composed at the time of the events. Apart from the verses on Haraldr's youth, for example, the narrative of the Óláfr Haraldsson's last battle at Stiklarstaðir, as presented by *Hkr*, is apparently a seamless conjunction of prose and verse, and the author takes pains to stress that Óláfr Haraldsson desired poets to be witness to the battle in order that they may record history, thus apparently lending an extra sheen of factuality to his own following narrative, drawing as it does on verse.¹⁴¹ Almost all the verse he cites regarding the battle itself, however, is by Sigvatr, who was—as emerges from a conversation between the king and the three skalds who were present, but died in the battle—away in Rome at the time.¹⁴² Sigvatr's stanzas—which are the verses used to authenticate the narrative Óláfr's last battle—are therefore themselves based on *post facto* hearsay; how reliable, then, is *Hkr*'s account—and how do we square it with the author's own stated assertion of the authority of eyewitness accounts?¹⁴³

That any potential *Begleitprosa* from a time closer to the verse's composition might have been lost is made more likely when we consider the problems presented by the period between c.1030 and c.1130. Between the tenth century and roughly 1035, a large number of poets seem to have been Icelanders, who apparently lived in Norway in the service of the king.¹⁴⁴ Many, but not all, of these poets seem to have returned to Iceland,

¹⁴¹ *Hkr* II: 358 (*HkrH*: 496): “Skuluð þér,’ segir hann [sc. Óláfr], ‘hér vera ok sjá tíðendi, er hér gerask. Er yðr þá eigi segjandi saga til, því at þér skuluð frá segja ok yrkja um síðan’” (“‘You must be here’, he says, ‘and see the events that take place here. Then there will be no talk of telling you the tale, but you shall tell of it and compose verses about it yourself later’”). Note the alliteration on ‘s’ in the king’s words: surely the mark of a saga author’s shaping of this speech.

¹⁴² The three skalds whom the king asked to bear witness were Þormóðr Kolbrúnarskáld, Gizurr gullbrá, and Þorfinnr munnr; the source for Sigvatr’s absence is the same passage in the saga, which follows on directly from the lines cited in the previous note (*Hkr* II: 358; *HkrH*: 496).

¹⁴³ For a sensitive reading of the relationships of verse and prose in the various narratives of this battle (in *Hkr* II: 355–94 (*HkrH*: 494–521), *Ólhelg*: 182–96, and *FbS*: 261–76 (Viðar Hreinsson et al., trans. 1997b: 392–402)), see O’Donoghue (2005: 68–76). The aftermath of this battle is discussed further below.

¹⁴⁴ On the ethnicity of the skalds, cf. Clunies Ross (2009b); her data appear to show that fewer skalds than were previously thought were Icelanders, and there seem to have been more Norwegian poets before c.1035 than Icelanders, though the proportion is reversed after this, and all professional poets are now Icelanders. On the probability of survival of skaldic versification in Norway, see also Marold (2005: 247–53), who suggests that the verse

and many have sagas written about them—often concerning their deeds in Iceland.¹⁴⁵ However, after the reign of Haraldr Sigurðarson, little is known about the poets, and there are fewer poems extant than from Haraldr's reign and earlier; perhaps oddly, it seems to be the case that during this period a somewhat greater percentage of poets was Icelandic than before.¹⁴⁶ The kings clearly still maintained court poets, even if relatively little is known about them.¹⁴⁷ There is practically no historical information (verse or prose) available for Iceland during this period: *Ísl* and *Landnámabók* stop before it, and *Sturlunga saga* resumes after it.¹⁴⁸ Even the *Íslendingasögur* do not cover this period. There are, however, both verse and prose accounts of the kings of Norway during this time—though the sagas in which verse is included in significant quantity are either by Icelanders (*Msk*; *Hkr*), or at least in part derived from the work of Icelanders (the possibly-Norwegian *Fsk*, which draws heavily on *Msk*). Since little is known about any skaldic poets of this period, Gade suggests that the poets might not have left behind any traditions about themselves in Iceland because they spent all their lives in Norway (earlier poets, in contrast, seem to have returned to Iceland).¹⁴⁹ Nothing is known about the mode of education of the poets, whether in Iceland or Norway, and nothing is known about the transmission and preservation of verse in this period; while it may be plausible to suggest that verse was transmitted in written form from sometime in the twelfth century, it is unlikely to have

from Norway is not known only because the written transmission is primarily Icelandic, not because it was not cultivated. One should note, though, that the assessment of ethnic identity is based primarily on later prose accounts, and it is difficult to be certain how reliable it is, or exactly what ethnic identity is supposed to mean (on which, cf. the remarks of Christiansen cited above, chapter two, n. 53).

¹⁴⁵ Gade (2000b: 78–9); Poole (ed. 2001).

¹⁴⁶ Clunies Ross (2009b).

¹⁴⁷ Gade (2000b: 79; 82–4).

¹⁴⁸ *Landnámabók* (Jakob Benediktsson, ed. 1968b; Hermann Pálsson and Edwards, trans. 1972), surviving in recensions only from the late thirteenth century or later (though an early version might have been composed in the first quarter of the twelfth), contains detailed accounts of the settlement of Iceland, the family and political relationships between the first generations of Icelanders, and geographical descriptions of Iceland's various regions; it does provide genealogies reaching into the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, but the actual narrative portions focus on the settlement period (c.870–c.930), and do not extend beyond the eleventh century. For introductions to this text: Jakob Benediktsson (1966–9), and the introduction and notes in Hermann Pálsson and Edwards (trans. 1972); very brief comments are provided more recently in Whaley (2000). As a corrective to traditional literary readings of the text and of the history of Icelandic settlement, cf. Adolf Friðriksson and Orri Vésteinsson (2003); Orri Vésteinsson (1998).

¹⁴⁹ Gade (2000b: 79; 84).

been written before that point. There is thus a clear gap in information about poets and about Iceland; and the first historical works to be written at the end of this lacuna, in Iceland and in Norway (*Ísl*; *HN*; *HARN*; *Ágrip*; the Latin lives of the Óláfrs¹⁵⁰), scarcely include native verse at all.

This constellation of facts raises a number of questions: since it has apparently survived, presumably verse about kings like Haraldr Sigurðarson and his predecessors was still recited for the Norwegian kings, Haraldr's descendants, during the century after his death. Was this poetry taught to the skalds along with explanatory prose? Or was it simply taught as a part of the poetic inheritance, with no more explanation than the names of the kings (claimed as ancestors of the current ruler), about whom the verse was said to be? Given that little is known about the skalds, if Gade is correct that this is because they spent their lives in Norway, then, assuming they arrived there as skalds, where did they learn their craft? If the poets lived only in Norway, how did the poetry, but no traditions about the skalds themselves, survive in Iceland? And how did the poetry they composed in Norway reach Iceland and apparently survive there, if the skalds themselves remained in Norway? Recall further that of the three unambiguously Norwegian synoptics, only *Ágrip* cites verse (I exclude the non-native poetry cited by Theodoricus), and very little (though as Heather O'Donoghue demonstrates, the author of this work uses his few verses in almost all the possible methods later employed by the compendia¹⁵¹); the first history to make use of much verse is *Msk*, universally agreed to be Icelandic, and drawing on heavily on indisputably Icelandic tradition.

Given that the skalds served in Norway, but not in Iceland, we have a curious picture before us: poetry was preserved and recited in Norway, about Norwegian kings; the first (Norwegian) histories of these kings do not cite such verse, though Theodoricus (and the Dane Saxo) acknowledge that Icelandic (not Norwegian) poems are an excellent source of historical information,¹⁵² nor does the first king's saga in the vernacular,

¹⁵⁰ Given that **Hryggjarstykki* is no longer extant, I do not speculate on the use of verse in it; according to Andersson and Gade, this work probably contained no verse, though it might have had poems among its sources (2000: 46). *Ísl* contains one verse as a part of the narrative (15; Grønlie, trans. 2006: 8), and Oddr Snorrason's biography of Óláfr Tryggvason may have contained a Latin paraphrase of one skaldic verse as a source (O'Donoghue 2005: 17).

¹⁵¹ O'Donoghue (2005: 24–45).

¹⁵² *HARN*: 1, ll. 7–11; Saxo: *prae*f.i.4; both passages are cited above, chapter one, n. 62. Unlike Saxo, Theodoricus never explicitly cites any Icelandic poetry, and his praise is, one should note, not notably effusive (in contrast to that of Saxo; this might, however, simply have to do with his relative reticence in comparison with Saxo's overblown bombast); as noted above (chapter one, n. 63), he elsewhere seems to be hesitant about accepting

about Sverrir, a contemporary king, cite much verse.¹⁵³ The first large compendium, composed in Iceland, does use verse, much of it composed by supposedly Icelandic poets—but many of these poets apparently spent

oral testimony. Saxo also praises Danish poems, recorded in runic inscriptions, as source material: “Nec ignotum uolo Danorum antiquiores conspicuis fortitudinis operibus editis glorię emulatione suffusos Romani stili imitatione non solum rerum a se magnifice gestarum titulos exquisito contextus genere ueluti poetico quodam opere perstrinxisse, uerumetiam maiorum acta patrii sermonis carminibus uulgata linguę suę literis saxis ac rupibus insculpenda curasse. Quorum uestigiis ceu quibusdam antiquitatis uoluminibus inherens tenoremque ueris translationis passibus emulatus metra metris reddenda curauit, quibus scribendorum series subnixa non tam recenter conflata quam antiquitus edita cognoscatur, quia pręsens opus non nugacem sermonis luculentiam, sed fidelem uetustatis notitiam pollicetur. Quantum porro ingenii illius homines historiarum edituros putemus, si scribendi sitim Latinitatis peritia pauissent, quibus tametsi Romanae uocis notitia abesset, tanta tradendę rerum suarum memorię cupido incessit, ut uoluminum loco uastas moles amplecterentur, codicum usum a cautibus mutuantes?” (Friis-Jensen and Zeeberg, eds and trans. 2005; *præf.* i.3; Ellis Davidson and Fisher, trans. 1979–80: 3: “I do not wish it to be unknown that the ancient Danes, suffused with the [desire for] emulation of glory when any notable acts of valour had been done, not only narrated in imitation of the Roman style the renown of the deeds done by themselves in an excellent manner of composition, as though in a poetic work, but also took pains to inscribe the deeds of the ancients, narrated in songs in their native language, on rocks and cliffs, in the letters of their own tongue [*sc.* runes]. Following in their footsteps as though [they were] certain books of antiquity, and having emulated the tenor [of their songs] by keeping in true step with them in my translation, I have taken pains to render verse with verse, supported by which the chronicles I am about to write will be recognised as not having been recently composed, but produced in antiquity, for the present work promises not frivolous luxury of speech, but true knowledge of antiquity. How many histories can we suppose men of such genius would have written, had they defeated their thirst for writing with expertise in Latin, men who, although lacking a knowledge of Roman speech, had nevertheless such a desire for preserving the memory of their deeds that they encompassed massive boulders in place of rolls, obtaining the function of books from rocks?”).

¹⁵³ Gade’s suggestion that *Sverris saga* contained little verse because it was based on eyewitness accounts, and because the verse from the Norwegian court never reached Iceland, seems questionable (2000b: 84): *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar*, written about Sverrir’s grandson by Sturla Þórðarson in the 1260s, contains verse, even though Sturla wrote shortly after Hákon’s death, and the saga was commissioned by Hákon’s son, so that Sturla would doubtless have had access to eyewitness accounts too. Furthermore, Karl Jónsson, the author of *Sverris saga*, must surely have had close contact with the Norwegian court (and the Icelandic skalds there, or their families) to enable him to write *Sverris saga*. Gade also suggests that there is verse in *Hákonar saga* because prosimetrum was now the accepted form for kings’ sagas (Gade 2000b: 86); but surely Sturla ought to have found *Sverris saga*—written about Hákon’s grandfather, and like *Hákonar saga* written about a contemporary ruler—a better model than the compendia? At any rate, though it lies outside the scope of the present work, it is certainly worth considering (particularly in the light of the studies by Guðrún Nordal (2001) and Wanner (2008)) why Sturla would have felt prosimetrum an appropriate form for a saga on a king. It is particularly interesting to note, in this context, that according to *Skáldatal*, an appendix to *Snorra Edda* contained in two manuscripts of that work, Sverrir was patron to more skalds than Hákon, and in fact was exceeded in this respect only by Haraldr harðráði Sigurðarson (Jón Sigurðsson, ed. 1848–87, ii: 251–69); despite this, his saga is very poor in verse.

their lives in Norway; the manner of transmission of their verse in Iceland is not known. The verse is often (though not invariably) used in the compendia precisely in those locations where the latter expand on the information contained in the synoptics; this might suggest that the verse was uniquely preserved in Iceland, which is why it was used there, but not by the authors of the Norwegian synoptics. On the other hand, the possible Norwegian authorship of *Fsk* is significant, given that this text appears to have access to a rather large amount of verse not recorded elsewhere, but contains less developed prose narratives going along with the verse. This implies, perhaps, that verse was indeed preserved in Norway as well; and most recently, Marold has demonstrated that the techniques of versification in *dróttkvætt* were indeed clearly known in Norway, as evidenced by surviving runic inscriptions (which are not, however, of the same genre of verse as the panegyrics of the kings' sagas).¹⁵⁴ Nevertheless, the tradition of composing sagas that incorporated verse grew up around the stories in Iceland about Icelandic skalds at Norwegian courts, and such more evolved prose narratives were therefore unavailable to the author of the Norwegian compendium—and perhaps also to the authors of the synoptics.

We have no way of knowing when and how the verse got to Iceland, and given that a substantial percentage of the poets—especially in the period before c.1035—were in fact Norwegian,¹⁵⁵ it seems odd that apparently no specifically Norwegian traditions of using such verse in historical narrative survive. There is little information about Iceland for a period of about one century, but Icelanders nevertheless record in writing information that at least one of them (the author of *Hkr*) explicitly claims is largely derived from verse, and is about the Norwegian kings. It is possible, therefore, that the mode of transmission of verse to Icelanders included Norwegian poets or storytellers; the prose accreting around the verse might be a more Icelandic tradition, though we should be mindful of Diana Whaley's speculation that "Norwegians must surely have handed their traditions to Icelanders in at least a semi-coherent narrative form".¹⁵⁶ This seems particularly likely when we consider that according to Margaret Clunies Ross, "after about 1035 in Norway skaldic verse was considered a largely royal and aristocratic accomplishment for Norwegians, not a professional skill"

¹⁵⁴ Marold (2005: 247–53).

¹⁵⁵ Clunies Ross (2009b).

¹⁵⁶ Whaley (1993a: 48).

(this statement is based on the fact that all known Norwegian skalds of this period belonged to the royalty or upper aristocracy).¹⁵⁷ If we accept that the verse was transmitted to Icelanders at least in part by Norwegian magnates, surely the verse about royal and aristocratic personages should be treated as highly suspect, especially if composed by other Norwegians of prior generations, but even if not. More importantly, it seems plausible to suggest that while verse was memorised, composed and cultivated in Norway as an aristocratic pastime, perhaps with bare details about the figures in the verse (who would have been commemorated as ancestors of the “royal and aristocratic” Norwegian poets), the Norwegian poets were not also storytellers, and did not thus bring forth a saga tradition. Such a tradition, which seems clearly more evolved in terms of detail and treatment of verse within prose narratives in *Msk* and *Hkr* than in *Fsk*, might have had more of an Icelandic origin, and might also have come about synchronously with the growth of the early *Íslendingasögur* (many of which are about skalds)—which was a genuinely Icelandic development, without any perceptible Norwegian influence.

We should note also that much of the expansion in the Icelandic compendia comes not only from prosimetrical narratives, but from wholly prose stories, often about Icelanders in the service of Norwegian kings (of which some, though not all, are fully-formed *þættir*). There was clearly an oral tradition alive in Iceland concerning Icelanders in Norway, many of whom were skalds; a significant amount of this material was not, however, connected to any of the poetry of those skalds,¹⁵⁸ which might suggest that transmission of verse and prose could have taken place independently. Furthermore, since the prose available in Iceland principally concerned Icelanders, and was thus often independent of the verse about Norwegian kings, it is possible the prose of the extant sagas was composed (on the basis of Norwegian transmission of verse?) by Icelanders as they began, in the years around 1200, to compose the kings’ sagas and other long prose narratives.

All of this should already make us suspicious about claims regarding the stability of both verse and potential accompanying prose. It appears that the Icelanders were known for their verse, and they introduced, for whatever reasons, the tradition of including verse in their histories (though we should remember that the largely verse-free *Sverris saga* was also

¹⁵⁷ Clunies Ross (2009b: 188).

¹⁵⁸ Andersson (2008b).

apparently written by an Icelander, and the first extant Icelandic history by Ari contained practically no verse, especially not as an authenticating device). But given that many poets were Norwegian, as was the subject matter, perhaps by the twelfth century Icelanders were known not just as professional poets, but—and more importantly—as professional storytellers. The verse itself, in other words, need no longer have been as much of a specifically Icelandic attribute as the composition of prosimetrical sagas, using purportedly ancient verse. If this is the case, however, the notion of a *Begleitprosa* that is as old as the verse loses all plausibility: according to this hypothesis, the Icelanders certainly inherited verse from Icelandic poets, but also learnt it from Norwegian skalds, who, albeit normally not professional, were also bearers of the tradition of historical poetry.¹⁵⁹ The traditions inherited via Icelandic poets and storytellers might have contained mainly non-panegyric verse (which is primarily what is recorded in the skald sagas), while the material derived from Norwegian traditions might have contained largely poems about the Norwegian kings. Using their unique storytelling skills, the Icelanders composed sagas about Icelanders at the king's court, and also prose stories around the verse—and perhaps, like the priest Ingimundr in *Porgils saga*, they added some new verse too, which, according to one part of *Hkr's* theory, would be acceptable as long as it was the right sort of verse.

We know nothing of how the authors of *Ágrip*, and more importantly *Msk*, had access to the verse they used, or even whether it was the same verse that *HARN* refers to but does not cite. We could postulate that aged skalds would return to Iceland, teach younger men verse, and these young poets would then go to Norway, returning again in old age. This begs the question: why do we know so little about such returning older poets after middle of the eleventh century, especially since they would presumably have earned something of a reputation (and much wealth, thus leaving behind material goods to which stories might be attached¹⁶⁰) by their years of service in Norway? We should also ask whether Norway was really so lacking in any independent mechanisms of preserving his-

¹⁵⁹ I build here on suggestions of Gade (2000b: 70; 76; 84; 91, n. 15); her speculations seem now to be confirmed by Clunies Ross (2009b).

¹⁶⁰ Elisabeth Van Houts provides a sensitive analysis of 'objects as pegs for memory' in a different context (1999: 93–120). On objects and oral traditions in Iceland, see Perkins (1989), which sets out some basic methodologies and essential caveats, not least the fact that the existence of a genuinely ancient object says nothing about the factual value of any stories attached to it; cf. also Andersson and Gade (2000b: 62), for traditions adhering to particular objects in *Msk*.

torical tradition: Norwegian (aristocratic) skalds were surely personally invested in the cultivation of aristocratic and royal memorial traditions, and must have played a role in the transmission of the verse (even that originally composed by Icelanders) and some sort of informal prose narratives too. Even though the genre of a prosimetrical saga seems to be more an Icelandic than a Norwegian development, the verse was, after all, about Norwegian kings, and it is hardly likely that there would have been no narratives at all, verse or prose, preserved in Norwegian circles as well, however informally.¹⁶¹ This might have been less detailed than, and more importantly, different in its details from, the prose composed by Icelandic poets and saga narrators. Such a geographical disjunction might account for some of the disparities between verse and prose, and between the sometimes differing treatments in the sagas of the same verses: perhaps the traditions that grew up around the poetry in Iceland and Norway diverged, and the saga authors had to make sense of potentially competing heritages. At any rate, it seems impossible to assume much stability in the tradition, given the lack of information and the non-institutionalised image of skaldic education and preservation of verse provided by the little information we have.¹⁶²

My suggestion (completely impossible to prove, but hopefully matching the few facts we have) would be that the poems were not, in fact, preserved from the start with any stable, formal prose narrative.¹⁶³ When composed, they would have required none; over the years, as the witnesses to the events died, some contextualisation of the verse might have been required, depending on the performance/recitation context: if the

¹⁶¹ Bagge suggests that “the oral background to the sagas was largely Norwegian” (1995: 6); he does not differentiate between verse and prose. Andersson and Gade point out that the *Msk*-author had one named Norwegian informant (not in other sources): Sigurðr, later to become a bishop in Bergen (*Msk*: 398–9; *MskAG*: 357–8; *Msk* does not explicitly state that the man was Norwegian) (2000: 61). There seems to be no further evidence for Norwegian transmission of traditions about Norwegian kings.

¹⁶² On the channels of preservation and transmission of skaldic verse, see also the fascinating discussion of Matthew Townend (2003) with regard to the four poems extant concerning viking Dublin and York (of which only two are preserved in the context of kings’ sagas): he concludes that poetry was generally preserved without very much context, and passed on to younger poets as a part of their training, tied to information concerning their forebears, who were also often poets; and that it was also exchanged among contemporary poets as they moved between different courts. His arguments are very sound, though he concedes that there is depressingly little evidence on which to base any solid theory.

¹⁶³ A conclusion similar to that presented in the following paragraph, if somewhat more circumspect, is reached by Townend (2003: 68–9), with regard specifically to poems about viking Dublin and York.

verse was simply being taught as a part of a standard repertoire for a young skald, or as an exercise in learning how to compose (these possibilities are not mutually exclusive), it is quite likely that little information was provided, beyond, perhaps, the names of the composer and king concerned (without necessarily any nickname, thus perhaps leaving the way open for poems to be transferred from one king to another with the same name). In the context of a court performance, more information would perhaps (but not necessarily) have been provided—but over the course of time, it is likely that such information would have lost much in terms of accuracy. Especially if the performance of poems about older kings was simply meant to be entertainment rather than historical narrative (and we can never know to what extent there was any perceived distinction, and where the boundary might have been drawn), and if the value lay more in the poem's aesthetic appeal than in the information it conveyed, it is quite possible that much of the additional context might have got lost over the generations, even if the verse was preserved without too much alteration. Even more likely is that accompanying explanatory matter would have been changed depending on the interpretations of the verse of individual poets or storytellers (and we do not even know the extent to which the role of poet and saga narrator overlapped), and on the needs of the context in which the verse was performed or taught; performances of whole sagas in an Icelandic context might have diverged significantly from performances of sagas or verse alone at the Norwegian court, just as aristocratic Norwegian amateur poets might have received explanatory matter with the verses they learnt that differed from what was passed on to professional Icelandic poets.¹⁶⁴ Diverging traditions, both

¹⁶⁴ Apart from the passage from *Þorgils saga* cited above, the most famous evidence for the performance of sagas comes from an incident in *Msk*: 199–200 (*MskAG*: 222–3): an Icelander comes to the court of Haraldr Sigurðarson, and narrates stories (“sögur”). As Christmas approaches, he becomes downcast, because he has run out of stories to tell, save one about the king himself (“Ein er sagan eftir oc þori ec þa eigi her at segia. þvi at þat er utferdar saga þin”; “there is only one saga left and I dare not tell it here, since it is the saga of your travels abroad”). The king persuades him to tell the saga, and he recites it over thirteen days; the king says “mer þiccir allvel oc hvergi verr en efni” (“I liked it very much and didn’t find it untrue to the events”), and asks where the Icelander learnt the saga from. The man replies: “Þat var vandi minn vt a landino at ec for hvert sumar til þings oc nam huert sumar af sǫgunni nǫcquap at Halldori Snorrasynti” (“It was my custom out in Iceland to go every summer to the meeting of the thing every summer and I learnt some part of the saga every summer from Halldórr Snorrason”). This anecdote therefore not only supplies some evidence that sagas might have been performed at the Norwegian court by Icelanders (though it is impossible to know whether this applies equally to the milieu around the time *Msk* was composed as to the time of Haraldr himself); it also makes a claim regarding

of verse and prose, might have existed in Norway and Iceland, even about the same personages and events; the narratives of the sagas thus represent the efforts of the authors to harmonise (following the demands of their specific contexts) the various narrative threads to which they had access. In other words, unless one argues for a fixed tradition of oral prosimetrum (for which there is no evidence), the verse probably had little attached to it beyond the name of a king—if even that—and might not itself have had a stable form; the number of verses within a poem, any accompanying explanatory prose, and perhaps even the wording of the verses, might have differed depending on the particular performance context.

It is not necessary to postulate that this process of harmonising that we see in the individual compendia was carried out only or primarily by the authors of the written accounts; the passage from *Porgils saga* cited above and the anecdote from *Msk* cited at n. 164 seem to be examples of evidence for the existence of oral sagas in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, which were composed and performed without reference to any written version.¹⁶⁵ But these texts cannot be used as proof for the existence of fixed oral narratives. The balance of the evidence seems to suggest that the extant written prosimetra do not derive from any stable, necessarily ancient combinations of verse and *Begleitprosa*. The task of the saga authors was to put together the verses and the various stories that they heard (and read) in a coherent form; as is well known, they did this with varying degrees of consistency and coherence, and it is apparent that at least on some occasions, they used other, non-native sources, as well as their own imaginative or rational facilities to help them along. With regard to the relationship between oral tradition, written sagas, and the possibility of fixed narratives, Andersson concludes that “there was no such thing as *Egils saga* in the tradition; there was only, so to speak, inert

the authenticity of the material presented: Halldórr was one of Haraldr's lieutenants in his travels east, and is cited in *Hkr* (*Hkr* III: 79; *HkrH*: 583; cited below, chapter three, n. 95) as the one bringing back the narratives on Haraldr to Iceland. For discussions of evidence for saga performance, including this passage, see, apart from Meulengracht Sørensen (2001), Andersson (2006: 5–9; 2008a: 9–10); Hermann Pálsson (1999: 77–87); Gísli Sigurdsson (2004: 35–7); Danielsson (2002a: 231–5).

¹⁶⁵ See further the literature cited at n. 164 for discussion and further anecdotal evidence of saga performance. In this context, we should recall also Andersson's comment that “in the extensive prose literature passed down from thirteenth-century Iceland there is not a single episode visualizing a storyteller who reproduces the deeds or adventures of past kings or of Icelanders who lived in the Saga Age” (Andersson 2006: 8). On the wedding at Reykjahólar, see also Hermann Pálsson (1999: 78), who believes (*contra* most other scholarship) that the recitation that took place was of written sagas read out to the audience.

tradition waiting for a skilled narrator to make something out of it, orally or in writing",¹⁶⁶ and while one must note that a concept such as "inert tradition" can be problematic (any narrative must have some coherent performable form, and exists only in that form and in the minds of people, not as some sort of disembodied thing in itself), if one accepts it simply as indicating that there were many stories available in various forms that only became more or less fixed in performance or writing, then the same observation would apply, I believe, to the kings' sagas before they reached their current written form. The divergences between the extant narratives thus attests to the diversity of the narrative traditions drawn on by the saga authors.

The form of the prose narratives attached to the verse was not, therefore, that of a 'fixed' saga of some sort, but rather of variable and informal narratives of differing content and length. The existence of informal prose narratives of heroic legend was suggested by Hans Kuhn half a century ago;¹⁶⁷ his conclusions regarding the form and content of such stories need to be treated cautiously, but the idea is itself not only plausible, but likely, and applicable to other kinds of narratives too. The oral traditions underlying the Icelandic sagas have more recently been extensively discussed by Tommy Danielsson, Gísli Sigurðsson and Theodore Andersson,¹⁶⁸ who, although approaching the issue from very different perspectives, generally concur that there probably were relatively long oral sagas in existence, on which the extant written narratives are based.¹⁶⁹ Despite considerable

¹⁶⁶ Andersson (2006: 15).

¹⁶⁷ Kuhn (1961); this paper was originally published in 1952.

¹⁶⁸ Danielsson (2002a; 2002b); Gísli Sigurðsson (2004; 2007; 2008); Andersson (2002; 2006, esp. 1–20; 2008a; 2008b; 2009); in addition, see the essays collected in Mundal and Wellendorf (eds 2008). See Andersson (2004b; 2008a) for a critical appraisal of the works of Gísli and Danielsson, and on Gísli, see also Glauser (2007, esp. 26, n. 39). Danielsson's work (2002b) concerns the oral stage preliminary to the written kings' sagas, though the bulk of it is in fact a synthesis of earlier scholarship, including a detailed re-examination of theories of textual affiliation more accessibly summarised in Andersson (1985), attempting to add orality to the mix of textual affiliations suggested by prior scholars. Gísli's work is almost exclusively on the *Íslendingasögur* and is not discussed further here. Andersson (2008b) is on the *Hkr*-version of *Óláfs saga helga* and its oral sources, and Andersson (2009) is on the oral background to the kings' sagas. Andersson (2006) includes lengthy chapters on the sagas of the two Óláfrs, and on Magnús góði Ólafsson and Haraldr harðráði Sigurðarson, but is more concerned with the *Íslendingasögur*, as is Andersson (2002).

¹⁶⁹ The details of the debate on the nature of the oral tradition are not particularly pertinent to my purpose here, especially since the scholars agree, in any case, that we cannot hope to access what this tradition contained. It should be noted that none of the authors cited is concerned specifically with the problem of relationship of verse to prose, but rather with the oral background to the sagas as large narrative units. I do not dispute the

divergences in methods and focus, these scholars agree on the existence of a wide range of oral narratives, from informal prose to *þættir* to fully-formed sagas, but also agree that little can be said about what exactly this oral tradition contained, and that it could not have been particularly stable. None of these authors argues that there were 'fixed' traditions, and there is in fact a notable hesitation in speculating both about the content of these putative oral sagas and their relationship to the extant texts, though the consensus seems to be that "there is unlikely to have been a one-to-one match between written sagas and equivalent oral stories".¹⁷⁰

Such stories might, at some points, have been connected with specific verses, but it is equally possible that informal narratives circulated in varying degrees of relationship to the real events, and such narratives were, at various points, connected with or disconnected from verses (and not always the same verses). There is thus a conjunction of more-or-less variable tradition in prose and verse, as well as the deliberate intent of one or more authors per text, something Oskar Bandle has tentatively characterised as the difference between 'tradition' (what the author received) and 'fiction' (the author's own contribution), though he is cautious to state that the author's modifications probably had no conscious fictionalising intent.¹⁷¹ Bandle is, however, unable to come up with really workable guidelines by which we may distinguish between the interventions of *Hkr*'s author and the traditions he reports, beyond comparison with other versions; in his view the author's main contribution is not so much the addition of motifs as the structuring of the texts (which can, however, include the addition of direct speech, and thus affect historical content).

existence of an oral tradition, including prose narratives either coupled to or independent of verse; my concern is with the issue of stability, and specifically with the connection between prose and verse, and therefore the arguments surrounding, for example, the authenticity of prose unconnected to verse, are here left aside. It should also be mentioned that all these scholars seem to believe that saga-composition was an Icelandic skill, drawing on Icelandic traditions, ignoring the likelihood that, for the kings' sagas at least, there must have been a fairly rich Norwegian tradition of some sort, borne by Norwegians, about the Norwegian kings, and that this tradition must have influenced the sagas ultimately written by Icelanders. It is salutary also to be aware of the comparative context provided by the study of living oral traditions (not considered by the works on Norse traditions cited here): for a very useful and critical survey, ranging from panegyric poetry to 'historical gossip', see Vansina (1985), and for an explicit and illuminating comparison of medieval European with modern Turkic oral traditions, see Reichl (2000).

¹⁷⁰ Andersson (2006: 19).

¹⁷¹ Bandle (1993); cf. similarly Goetz (2003: 242), with regard to continental Latin historiography.

The question of the saga authors' initiative in shaping their narratives and their use of direct speech brings up the matter of verses used within dialogue. In most cases, verses are simply cited with some formula such as 'svá segir x' or 'sem segir x' ('as x says'), and are not integrated as a part of the narrative itself; they serve an authenticating function, and insofar as they contain information, this largely mirrors (even if often not quite exactly) what is contained in the prose. In these cases, the suggestions outlined above regarding the evolution of the prosimetrical narratives seem most plausible. In other instances, however, the verses are presented as a part of the dialogue or action, and the narrative often (but not invariably) requires the verse to make any sense.¹⁷² We should note that such stanzas are a minority of the total corpus of verse in the kings' sagas (*Msk* includes a disproportionately large number of such strophes). In the case of these 'situational' verses (to adopt Whaley's nomenclature),¹⁷³ it might appear that the verse and prose must have been fixed together in some way, in order to function as dialogue, for example. If this is so, then for these verses at least we would have an authentically ancient prosimetrum. However, even in cases of supposedly 'situational' verse, we cannot assume a stable tradition: especially where the verses have a largely moral content (rather than being recitations of events), the prose context could be very easily changed, depending on what kings and retainers the respective storyteller wished to comment about. Moreover, such verses embedded in action are, by their very nature, only joined to a prose narrative of that action retrospectively, and are thus also suspect as historical evidence from the very inception of the stories.

A famous example is the dialogue between Þormóðr Kolbrúnarskáld and the woman who tends to the wounds of Óláfr helgi Haraldsson's warriors after the battle at Stiklarstaðir. This narrative is repeated in three sagas, which differ in the verses they present, and while the broad outline of the prose context is similar, there are a number of divergences

¹⁷² I consider here only those verses supposed to have been spoken by a skald or someone with poetic training, which might have been genuinely part of a real situation; cases in which people untrained in verse-making, or witches, trolls and other such figures, are supposed to have spontaneously composed verses can safely be excluded from the realm of historical veracity in modern (though not necessarily in medieval) terms.

¹⁷³ Whaley (1993c). See also Bjarni Einarsson (1974), as well as Fidjestøl (1997d), and the more analytical studies in O'Donoghue (2005), on the nature and function of such verses. A concise critique of the distinction between 'situational' and 'authenticating' verses is given in Clunies Ross (2005: 70–1; 78–80), which I develop further below, drawing heavily on Poole (1991), and O'Donoghue (2005).

between the narratives.¹⁷⁴ *Hkr*'s account has Þormóðr going to a barn where, in response to a discussion about who fought best, he speaks one verse, and then goes to an inner chamber and speaks two further verses to the woman treating the wounded men inside. His final words are in prose. In *Fóstbræðra saga* (*FbS*)¹⁷⁵ and *Ólhelg*, the verses are presented as a part of an extended dialogue with a woman tending the men's wounds; the skald answers her questions about the battle, the king, and himself, in verse. What is presented as the skald's last verse in both recensions of *FbS*, with the last word missing in one recension, and completed by Haraldr Sigurðarson (in both recensions!), is given in *Hkr* as Þormóðr's penultimate verse, and here, unlike in the other sagas, the poet does not fall to the ground dead while reciting it (note too that while the narrative of the woman trying to remove the piece of iron from Þormóðr's chest, given in *Hkr* and *Ólhelg*, is contained in one version of *FbS*, even here the poet ends his life with verse on his lips, unlike in the other two works). In *Hkr*, fewer of Þormóðr's verses are cited, and one of them is not really given as a response to a question, though it still seems to be more of a 'situational' verse than anything else.¹⁷⁶

In *Hkr*, there is rather more intervening prose than in the other sagas, and the narrative is really not carried by the verse. In contrast, in *FbS* and *Ólhelg*, verses are given with often only a line of prose, a single question, separating them. It may be debated which of the texts managed to weave together verse and prose in the 'best' manner, but it is clear that they do so differently, and therefore that the prosimetrum as a whole was variable. The *Hkr* account, to my mind, presents greater authorial control of the narrative, including more discretion in selecting verses; far more of the narrative is in the authorial voice, rather than in the dialogue of verse-plus-prose. The other two sagas make verse and prose match by a rather simple, though not necessarily more convincing, insertion of questions. In

¹⁷⁴ The narratives about Þormóðr in the aftermath of Stiklarstaðir are in *FbS*: 268–75, vv. 36–40 (Viðar Hreinsson et al., trans. 1997b: 393–5, vv. 32–6; 399–402, vv. 40–4); *Ólhelg*: 198–205, vv. 58–62, and *Hkr* II: 389–93, vv. 159–61 (*HkrH*: 518–21); the full texts are given in the Appendix to this chapter. For a recent interpretation, see O'Donoghue (2005: 73–6). Note that I do not go over in detail the many relatively minor differences between the verses as cited in the various versions sagas, nor, for reasons of space, do I reproduce all of these in the Appendix.

¹⁷⁵ The dating of this saga is particularly controversial, and it seems impossible to locate it chronologically with relation to *Ólhelg* and *Hkr*; for discussion, see Andersson (2006: 69–70). An alternative version preserved in *Flateyjarbók* is printed as a parallel text in the edition here cited; my references are to the main text.

¹⁷⁶ *Hkr* II: v. 159 = *FbS*: v. 38.

both *FbS* and *Ólhelg*, it seems to me, the verse could work quite well on its own; this is also the case in *Hkr*, but here, given that there are fewer verses and they are more spread apart, it appears that more effort has been made to place them appropriately within the prose. I would suggest, moreover, that in *FbS* the dialogue with the woman follows a somewhat less logical course than the other two versions: she first asks the poet why he will not let his wounds be bound, then asks two questions about the course of the battle, and then returns to Þormóðr's condition, asking why he looks so lifeless. *Hkr* and the *Ólhelg*, on the other hand, have no prose dialogue about Þormóðr's wounds unconnected to the two verses on that topic.

In none of the accounts would the prose really function without some sort of response from Þormóðr (though not necessarily in verse), though it is readily apparent that the verses and the dialogue do nothing to advance the 'plot', and it is clear that the prose narrative would be perfectly comprehensible on its own with only very minor changes. The verse is, in each of the texts, embedded in the prose, and thus 'situational', but the saga authors weave the verse into the prose in different ways, each according to his own purpose. Moreover, the portions of the prose that are independent from the verse vary quite considerably over the three texts. The differing versions of this episode make it clear that that even with such 'situational' verses, which appear in the accounts of *FbS* and *Ólhelg* to be inextricably bound to the prose, the prosimetrum as a whole does not go back to the time of the composition of the poetry, but was shaped, possibly by our saga authors, perhaps over the course of oral transmission, and is ultimately based on the narrative context in which the verses were to be used.

We should note further that the historicity of these verses and their contexts—at least as they are presented, compositions of a dying man—is probably dubious anyway. Some of the verses could be read as addressing a woman,¹⁷⁷ thus lending some credibility to the question-answer situation, but it seems to me that this is a prime example of 'situational' verses being composed along with the prose narrative after the fact: it is hardly likely that any of the wounded warriors would have been able to record and remember exactly the exchange between Þormóðr and the woman—even if we are able to believe that a severely wounded and dying poet could compose such perfect verse—and the narrative, and probably also the verses, must therefore have been composed later. Furthermore,

¹⁷⁷ O'Donoghue (2005: 74–5, with n. 176).

an analysis of the prosimetrum seems to show that the verses supposedly spoken in response to questions might actually have elicited the composition of those questions,¹⁷⁸ and it seems to me that even verses such as these, supposedly a part of a dialogue, would make as much sense just as a set of verses, without any intervening prose.¹⁷⁹ Comparing the three different versions (or four, counting both recensions of *FbS*), it seems most likely that both verse and prose were composed independently of the events reported in the sagas, but not concurrently: the saga authors, I would suggest, shaped the prose to match the verse in different ways, thus accounting for the divergent narratives.

In this example, although the sagas provide somewhat different prose contexts for Þormóðr's verses, in all cases, they are embedded within a dialogue of some sort, and they are thus in all the sagas presented as *lausavísur* ('loose/free stanzas') or 'situational' verses. However, stanzas that are cited in some texts as *lausavísur* and apparently as a spontaneous verse response to a particular situation are not always given in the same kind of context in all the manuscripts or texts. For example, a verse of Sigvatr is cited in *Ágrip* as direct speech, when the poet manages to change King Magnús's attitude to his people by summing up the people's feelings in verse, and as a direct reaction to their expression of rebellion:

Magnús konungr tók við ríki með alþýðu þokka of síðir, þó at með margs angri væri fyrst, því at hann hóf ríki sitt með harðræði fyr æsku sinnar sakar ok ágirndar ráðuneytis [...] Hann átti þing í Niðarósi ok reisti með freku sakargipt við Þrændi alla, ok stungu allir nefi í skinnfeld ok veittu allir þögn, en engi andsvör. Stóð upp þá maðr, Atli at nafni, ok mælti eigi fleiri orð en þessor: "Svá skorpnar skór at fœti mér, at ek má eigi ór stað komask." En Sigvatr kvað þar þegar vísu þessa:

Hættis þats allir ætla
áðr skal við því ráða,
hárir menn, es ek heyri,
hót, skjöldungi á móti.
Greypis þats hqfðum hneppa
heldr ok niðr í feldi,
slegit hefr þögn á þegna,
þingmenn nqsum stinga.

¹⁷⁸ O'Donoghue (2005: 74, with reference to *FbS*).

¹⁷⁹ Similar reservations apply to the other verses of Þormóðr, from just before the battle, also seemingly cited as 'situational' rather than authenticating verses: *FbS*: 258–66, vv. 28–35 (Viðar Hreinsson et al., trans. 1997b: 391–3, vv. 26–31; 396–7, vv. 37–9); *Hkr* II: 361–3, vv. 141–3 (*HkrH*: 499–500).

Ok raufsk þing þat með þeim hætti, at konungr bað alla menn finnask þar um morginn. Ok fannsk þá í hans orðum, at guð hafði skipt skapi hans, ok var þá freka snúin til miskunnar, hét öllum mönnum gæzku ok efndi sem hann hét eða betr, ok aflaðisk hönnum af því vinsæld mikil ok nafn þat, at hann var kallaðr Magnús góði.¹⁸⁰

The same verse is given in *Hkr* as a part of a longer poem, composed as a whole, and not in immediate, dialogic response to a given situation.¹⁸¹ In this account, the king's friends, who have heard of the dissatisfaction of the people and the threat of war, choose Sigvatr by lot as the person to speak to the king to change his ways:

Þessi kurr var víða í landi. Sygnir hǫfðu liðsamnað ok þat orð á, at þeir mundu halda til orrostu við Magnús konung, ef hann færi þar. Magnús konungr var þá á Hǫrðalandi ok hafði þar dvalizk mjök lengi ok hafði lið mikit ok lét sem þá mundi hann fara norðr í Sogn. Þessa urðu varir vinir konungs, ok gengu tólf menn á málstefnu, ok samðisk þat með þeim at hluta til einn mann at segja konungi þenna kurr. En svá var til stillt, at Sigvatr skalt hlaut.¹⁸²

Sigvatr now composes a *flokkr* (a set of verses in *dróttkvætt* without a refrain) called *Bersöglisvísur* ("Plain-speaking verses"), the point of which is to communicate to Magnús the people's dissatisfaction with his rule, and convince him to change his ways: "Sigvatr orti flokk, er kallaðr er Bersöglisvísur, ok hefr hann fyrst um þat, at þeim þótti konungr of mjök

¹⁸⁰ "King Magnús acceded to the kingdom with the goodwill of all the people over time, though he caused much grief at first, for he began his reign harshly on account of his youth and the avarice of his advisors [...] He held an assembly at Niðaróss and brought harsh charges against all the people of Trøndelag, and they all stuck their noses in their cloaks and responded only with silence, giving no answer. Then the man called Atli stood up, but he did not speak more words than these: 'The shoes on my feet are shrivelling so much that I cannot budge'. Following this, Sigvatr spoke this verse: 'It is very dangerous that, as I hear, all the hoary men intend to go against the king; he should deal with this first. It is perilous also that the men at the assembly bow their heads and stick their noses in their cloaks; silence has struck the men.' And the assembly broke up in the customary way, and the king asked that they should all come together there in the morning. And then it could be seen in his words that god had changed his mind, and the harshness was turned into mercy, he promised goodness to all men and fulfilled what he promised, or more, and he earned great popularity from this, and also to be called by the name Magnús the Good" (*Agrip*: 32–3; Driscoll, ed. and trans. 1995: 47–9).

¹⁸¹ *Hkr* III: 25–31, vv. 25–33 (*HkrH*: 552–5).

¹⁸² "This dissatisfaction was wide across the land. The people of Sogn had collected an army and spread the word that they would do battle against King Magnús if he should go there. King Magnús was at that time in Hǫrðaland and had tarried there long and had a great army and it seemed that he would go north to Sogn. The friends of the king became aware of this, and twelve men held a council and they agreed amongst themselves that they would choose by lot one man to tell the king about the grumbling. And it was arranged thus that Sigvatr was chosen" (*Hkr* III: 26; *HkrH*: 552).

velkja ráðin at setja bændr aptr, þá er heituðusk at reisa órfrið í móti honum".¹⁸³ *Hkr* cites nine verses of this *flokkr*, of which one (the eighth) is the verse quoted above from *Ágrip*, and we are told that "Eptir þessa áminning skipaðisk konungr vel. Fluttu margir ok þessi orð fyrir konungi. Kom þá svá, at konungr átti tal við ina vitrustu menn, ok sǫmðu þeir þá lǫg sín. Síðan lét Magnús konungr ríta lǫgbók þá, er enn er í Þrándheimi ok kǫlluð er Grágas. Magnús konungr gerðisk vinsæll ok ástsæll ǫllu landsfólki".¹⁸⁴

In *Fsk* too, the single verse cited in *Ágrip* is given as a part of a longer poem, of which all the stanzas are cited together;¹⁸⁵ the immediate prose context of the verse is very similar to that of *Hkr*, but the broader context is, as in *Ágrip*, that of a conflict with the people of Þrændalǫg, not of Sogn. In terms of the use of the verse, it seems to be that *Ágrip* presents us with a stanza that has been taken out of context—if we follow Poole and O'Donoghue and believe the later compendia¹⁸⁶—and given an immediate, dramatic situation in which it is spoken. The account in *Ágrip* presents a single verse as a spontaneous response to a sign of the people's dissatisfaction, and Magnús's change of heart follows the day after the one incident of the recitation of this verse. In contrast, *Fsk* and *Hkr* have the men convening an assembly, choosing Sigvatr as their speaker, Sigvatr composing a set of verses, and these verses being recited more than once before the king. As O'Donoghue notes, in *Hkr*, "the king's change of heart" is presented as "the inevitable outcome of a long process of nagging advice" and it is therefore "more plausible" than the narrative in *Ágrip*.¹⁸⁷ Thus the presentation of the individual verse in *Ágrip* is an instance of the probable

¹⁸³ "Sigvatr composed a *flokkr*, which is called *Bersǫglisvísur*, and it began by saying that they thought that the king should consider the decision to repel the farmers who had vowed to wage war against him" (*Hkr* III: 26; *HkrH*: 552). See also Gade's edition of the poem as a coherent long poem (ed. and trans. 2009: 11–30); a recent sensitive reading of the poem (treated largely as independent of the prose) is given in Goeres (2010: 229–45).

¹⁸⁴ "After this admonition the king changed for the better. Many [others] recited these words before the king as well. It happened thus, that the king took counsel with the wisest men, and his law seemed good to them. After this, King Magnús had that law-book written, which is still in Trondheim and is called Grágas. King Magnús became very popular and beloved to all the people of the land" (*Hkr* III: 31; *HkrH*: 554–5).

¹⁸⁵ *Fsk*: 212–15, vv. 167–71 (*FskF*: 170–3); note that *Fsk* has five as opposed to *Hkr*'s nine stanzas, that they are in a different order from that in *Hkr*, and that the relevant verse has the order of its helnings reversed. There is a lacuna in *Msk* at this point, but the poem also occurs in the *Flateyjarbók* version of *Magnúss saga*; cf. Goeres (2010: 235–45) on the different effects of the *Flateyjarbók* and *Hkr* versions, and Gade (ed. and trans. 2009: 11–12), for brief discussion of the differing manuscript traditions of the poem.

¹⁸⁶ Poole (1991: 8–10); O'Donoghue (2005: 39–42).

¹⁸⁷ O'Donoghue (2005: 41); this applies equally to *Fsk*'s account. Obviously, our standards of plausibility need not correspond to those of the medieval saga-writers.

context in which a verse was composed being distorted by an author of a written prose account (or his source). The nature of the verse itself, even in its form in *Ágrip*, is in fact more like the authenticating verse cited elsewhere in the sagas than the situational ones: it repeats exactly the information in the prose, and—unlike, for example, the verses of Þormóðr Kolbrúnarskáld after the battle of Stiklarstaðir, which do not duplicate the prose—it does not really fit within a dialogic situation. In this example, it seems to be that a single verse from a longer poem is taken out of context and turned into a ‘situational’ verse for the purposes of the saga author.

We should note also that it is not just the immediate situation—a single stanza in dialogue versus a longer poem not composed as a spontaneous response to an incident—that differs across the texts. All the works place the verses in the broader context of general dissatisfaction, certainly, but *Hkr* specifies that there is the immediate threat of war between the people of Sogn (in southern Norway) and Magnús, whereas the other texts do not mention Sogn, but Þrændalög (in the north). Moreover, in *Hkr*, Magnús is located in Hqrðaland, bordering on Sogn, while in *Ágrip* he is actually at Niðaróss, in the north (*Fsk* does not specify the king’s location, but given that the disturbance has to do with the Þrændir, Niðaróss seems plausible). In other words, it is not just that the basic historical situation remains the same, with *Ágrip* using a verse as a *lausavísa* for the sake of dramatising the narrative while the compendia present it as a part of a *flokkr*, with a different immediate genesis. Rather, even the broader context differs—and in this regard, the two compendia do not agree with each other against *Ágrip*, making it clear that the Þrændalög context (*Ágrip* and *Fsk*) was not bound to the use of the verse as ‘situational’ (only *Ágrip*).

These examples show that there are really no good ways of determining when a verse is genuinely ‘situational’, in that it must be embedded within a prose context to make sense. Even with supposedly ‘situational’ verses, the seamless fit of verse and prose most likely has to do with the ingenuity of the saga author, not with an ancient prosimetrum going back to the time the verse was composed, the time in which the reported events took place. Furthermore, as Poole has shown, the poems themselves generally offer few convincing linguistic reasons to believe they were composed contemporaneously: the use of the present tense in the verse is not an indicator of the verse being situational rather than retrospectively composed, and according to Poole, “the feeling of immediacy” does not

indicate a contemporary account, but is, rather, a “genre characteristic”.¹⁸⁸ It is clear, therefore, that even verse that is presented as inextricably tied to a prose context, which might make the whole prosimetrum appear more reliable, is in fact not a guarantor of anything beyond the individual author’s ingenuity in matching his prose to pre-existing verses. Here too, therefore, no stability of tradition, or genuine antiquity of narrative, can or should be assumed.

Summing Up: The Historical Value of the Kings’ Sagas

We have seen in the preceding pages that we cannot necessarily trust the saga accounts as to whether the verse was a spontaneous composition, and is therefore of necessity embedded within a prose narrative, or whether it was composed independently (after the events of which it tells, and perhaps not even by an eyewitness), and was not necessarily embedded within any prose narrative context. In the latter case, the prose might have been composed to fit the verse; or verses might have been selected from a longer poem to fit either an oral prose tradition, or a saga author’s purposes; or a saga author might have composed both verse and prose. We cannot be certain, in other words, when we are dealing with ‘authenticating’ or ‘situational’ verses; and the assignment of verses to either

¹⁸⁸ Poole (1991: 109). On the present historic tense in skaldic verse, see Poole (1991: 24–56, and *passim*); see also Whaley (2007: 89–94). For other examples of the difficulties involved in designating verses in the kings’ sagas as *lausavísur* or belonging to a longer poem: Poole (1988), on Snorri’s *Háttatal*, Þjóðólfr’s *Sexstefja*, and Eyvindr skáldaspillir on the battle of Stord; Poole (1991: 11–21), with reference to verses on Magnús góði Ólafsson by Oddr Kíkinaskáld (*Flateyjarbók*: Guðbrandr Vigfússon and Unger, eds 1868, iii: 334; *Fsk*: 249, v. 202 (*FskF*: 199–200); *Hkr* III: 63–4, v. 73; 105–6, v. 99 (*HkrH*: 574; 599); cf. Gade, ed. and trans. 2009: 31–4, for the whole poem); verses by Eyvindr skáldaspillir (*Fsk*: 98–9, v. 60 (*FskF*: 75–6); *Hkr* I: 221–4, vv. 102–4 (*HkrH*: 142–3)); the prophecy of a troll-woman before Haraldr harðráði Sigurðarson’s defeat at Stamford Bridge (*Hemings Pátr* (a late-thirteenth-century text transmitted in, among other MSS, *Flateyjarbók*): Fellows Jensen, ed. 1962: 44–6; *Msk*: 266–7, vv. 75–7 (*MskAG*: 264–5); *Fsk*: 277–8, v. 236 (*FskF*: 221); *Hkr* III: 176–7, vv. 150–1 (*HkrH*: 646); Gade, ed. and trans. 2009: 819–23, vv. 6–9); Whaley (2007), concerning Þjóðólfr Arnórsson’s verses on Magnús góði Ólafsson (with reference primarily to *Hkr* III: *Magnúss saga ins góða*: vv. 6, 9, 35, 38, 42, 44–59, 61–2, 64–70, 75; and *Haralds saga Sigurðarsonar*: v. 96; cf. the poem edited by Whaley as a single *flokkr* in Gade, ed. and trans. 2009: 61–87). In each case, the problem arises from the fact that the prose narratives make use of the verses differently, with the same verses cited in some sources as part of a longer poem, and as authenticating verses, and in other sources as situational *lausavísur*, embedded within a narrative context.

category cannot help us in the least with regard to assessing the authenticity of the verse, the accompanying prose, or the prosimetrum as a whole.

Why, when and in what measure the verse and prose were brought together are questions that cannot be dealt with by looking at either verse or prose alone; it is crucial to examine the function of verse with the prose context. Doing so might help to clarify whether it is likely that the prose and the verse actually belonged together for some time before the author used them: if there is clear dissonance, either in the narrative of events, or even in the concepts enunciated (for instance of kingship or nationality), or if the author has clearly used non-native sources in the prose, it is likely that there was, in this case, either no comprehensible *Begleitprosa* to explain the verse, or that the author chose to disregard any such extant accompanying prose (though this still does not say much about the age of the verse as we have it). If, on the other hand, the verse is well-integrated within the prose, it is possible (but not necessary) that the author received both verse and prose as a unit—though the possibility of the author's own imagination being the harmonising influence is always present, and perhaps even more likely.

Even if the prose and verse match, we cannot necessarily determine either the historical accuracy, or even the age of the prosimetrum we have received. To return to Sigvatr's *Bersöglisvísur*, while the use of the verse seems to be presented in a more historically plausible manner in the compendia than in *Ágrip*, the compendia disagree with regard to the broader historical context, and the use of what seems to be a more plausible method of integrating verse with prose does not, therefore, help us to decide what the actual historical situation was—and about this, *Ágrip* might well be correct, rather than *Hkr*. Even if the authors of the extant texts received verse and prose as a single unit, this does not mean that the prosimetrum dates back to the time of the events it narrates; the joining of verse and prose could have taken place at any point between the events and their writing down in the sagas. As a result of these considerations, therefore, it seems to me that the extant works are most valuable as a window into compositional techniques, and the functions of verse, prose, and the past altogether, in the time in which the sagas were written; they are of little value as historical sources for the periods of which they purport to tell.

The question of the historical value of the kings' sagas for the past that they narrate (as opposed to the time in which they were written) is a delicate one, and attempts to address it run into serious disciplinary divides, with literary scholars, not unnaturally, often preferring to hold on

to some notion of some sort of authenticity, and historians abandoning the kings' sagas altogether—though tending to retain, albeit with some hesitation, a belief in the usefulness of skaldic verse. Whaley, a literary scholar, said of the sagas in 1993 that “they incorporate the evidence of major skaldic poems which we still take to be probably genuine”;¹⁸⁹ in 2002, Eric Christiansen, one of the more iconoclastic of historians of medieval Scandinavia, seemed to concur somewhat with this statement, and even, implicitly, with the approach of Marold (though he does not cite her works surveyed above), asserting that skaldic verse is “indispensable” in revealing to us the “mentality” of the warriors of medieval Scandinavia, and saying of the poems that “their authenticity can only rest on strong probability, established by source criticism; *but that is good enough for most historical purposes*” (this statement is retained in the second edition of 2006, which I cite);¹⁹⁰ Sverre Bagge suggests that although inevitably biased, “skaldic poems [...] can be used to control some of the information given in the written sources”.¹⁹¹

It has not been my aim to dispute that there is probably *something* in these poems that goes back to the time in which they were purportedly composed. However, I have tried to show that, given the current state of scholarship, even the results we can achieve by using skaldic verse to understand the mentality of the period in which the poems are first supposed to have been recited are of uncertain value. I have suggested above some means by which we can begin to distinguish between the content of verse and prose, and thus perhaps establish whether or not the verse might have been older; this might give us some clues about relatively earlier and later cultural and political concepts, but will probably not provide any security regarding the date of whatever we find in the verse, or of the verse itself; and the verse is unlikely ever to enable the writing of any kind of historical narrative without recourse to the saga prose. It can, and I believe should, still be utilised for *some* historical purposes, but normally only in conjunction with the prose, and principally about the time in which it was written rather than of which it purports to tell, unless external, contemporary evidence is available. It seems to me that even greater caution is necessary than that practised even by as sceptical historians as Christiansen, since despite the ambitions of editors of skaldic

¹⁸⁹ Whaley (1993a: 54).

¹⁹⁰ Christiansen (2006a: 309; 308; my emphasis).

¹⁹¹ Bagge (2004: 196); this formulation seems to view the always written verse as somehow less ‘written’ than the surrounding prose.

verse, it remains very difficult to untangle it from the arts of the authors of saga prose (and the compilers and scribes of medieval manuscripts); and the clear and decontextualised creations of modern editors are just that: modern creations with a rather nebulous relation to any form of the poetry as it would have been known to most of the generations of medieval Scandinavians who preserved it. This is not to say that the discernible differences between poems thought to have been composed in different periods cannot tell us anything; but, lacking external means for dating or confirmation of the evidence of the poems (where we can interpret them without recourse to the prose), we need to be extremely cautious in extrapolating from literary analyses of poems judgements about diachronic developments in Scandinavian cultural history.¹⁹²

With regard to the sagas as a whole, the situation is even more difficult. Although, as Christiansen points out, “saga-study has ceased to be used as a telephone to the vikings”,¹⁹³ no historical narrative is possible based on the verse alone. Since few would now argue for any stability of prose going back to before the mid-twelfth century, this leaves us with no contemporary sources for any kind of narrative, for, as Whaley notes, “it is difficult to write a history of medieval Norway without referring to works such as *Ágrip*, *Fagrskinna* or *Hkr*”.¹⁹⁴ In a paper published in the same volume as Whaley’s, after providing an overview of the change from credulous to critical views of the kings’ sagas, the historian Knut Helle states that “Snorri’s presentation of Harald’s systematic unification of the realm [of Norway] must be rejected as an unhistorical reconstruction”, but, although he concedes in the same paragraph that there is no evidence from before the twelfth century for any such notion, Helle concludes that “it is still reasonable to regard Harald as a ruler who took an important early step

¹⁹² Goeres (2010) is an excellent recent example of a literary study that provides many insights into the understanding of these poems as extant artefacts independent of their prose contexts (though normally in forms reconstructed by modern editors, and accepting the dates assigned by the saga prose); but although this work is certainly a step in the right direction, the implications of Goeres’s arguments with regard to historical changes in cultural practices are unclear (it must be stated, in all fairness, that a historical analysis is explicitly not the aim of her study). While there seems to be a differentiation in modes of commemoration between pre- and post-conversion poems, greater temporal distinctions are difficult to achieve, and thus, although the mentality behind the poems are here convincingly interpreted, it still seems impossible to move beyond very vague generalisations in terms of historical analysis on the basis of these works.

¹⁹³ Christiansen (2006a: 305).

¹⁹⁴ Whaley (1993a: 56).

in the building up of a national kingdom".¹⁹⁵ Reasonable on what grounds, when no reliable evidence survives, with all extant sources dating from no earlier than two centuries after the event? The fact is that there are no contemporary sources for a narrative of Norwegian political history before the twelfth century; one must therefore either follow the sagas, or at least the verse they contain, or not attempt to write such history. The latter course often seems to be favoured, a strategy that reflects also the interests of the modern historical profession—so different from the concerns of medieval historians—in social, cultural, economic, institutional and gender history, with a corresponding neglect of a politically-oriented history of events. Thus two recent overviews of Scandinavian and Norwegian history in English largely ignore not only the evidence of the sagas, but also the political history that is the sagas' subject. Christiansen's book manages to avoid, almost completely, anything to do with political history and the deeds of kings—which is what practically all pre-modern, and most modern, historical writing was about until about the 1960s.¹⁹⁶ Similarly, Helle's survey of medieval Norwegian history is also concerned almost exclusively with society and culture, and the political development of Norway gets a short shrift: the unification of Norway and the consolidation of the monarchy, taking place over a period of more than two hundred years, is covered in just four pages (which also include two maps), in a chapter devoted to medieval Norway that comprises 117 pages.¹⁹⁷ Yet when any political narrative is to be given, the broad outlines of the sagas cannot be avoided; and even such critical historians as Krag and Helle, when forced to provide political histories, must ultimately be roughly in concord with the sagas and/or the verse contained therein.¹⁹⁸ While Bagge, Christiansen, Krag and Helle try and get around this problem (when they do mention political events) by appealing to the antiquity of the verse, it will hopefully be clear from the foregoing that until better methods have been found for determining the extent and nature of the independence of the poems from the prose, we cannot really claim that the narratives

¹⁹⁵ Helle (1993: 10).

¹⁹⁶ Christiansen (2006). Given that the sagas are, in essence, serial biographies of kings, and are deeply concerned with establishing genealogical links between the various rulers, it is striking that neither Helle (1995) nor Helle (ed. 2003)—both works specifically on Norwegian history—provide a genealogical table of Norwegian kings, and in fact make little attempt in their narrative to clarify the relationships between the various rulers.

¹⁹⁷ Helle (1995); this was translated from work originally published in Norwegian in 1991.

¹⁹⁸ Krag (2003); Helle (1995: 23–7; 2003).

we write based on the verse have any greater claims to historical accuracy than the histories composed by the authors of the compendia.¹⁹⁹

This is not a conundrum that it has been my purpose to resolve; nor do I wish to criticise the trend towards writing social history, which has indeed brought us many insights into the functioning of pre-modern societies. The present chapter has aimed to provide a minimalist outline of the evidentiary utility of the sagas and the verse they contain, and thus a foundation from which further scholarship might proceed to test these works and use them as historical documents. Accessing the events of the twelfth century through the sagas is perhaps less of a dubious procedure than trying to understand earlier periods: the saga authors would have had access to eyewitness accounts for events that lay back one or two generations in time, and their distortions would be no more than caused by the bias present in the works of all medieval historians. (Much work still needs to be done, however, in understanding the effects of saga authors' partisanship even with regard to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries). The sagas' most important functions for us, however, lie perhaps more in showing us how people of a time past conceived of their own past. More than serving as guides to viking-age mentality, the sagas can illuminate the ways in which Scandinavians in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries dealt with notions of truth, authenticity, history and fiction; and further examination of the use of sources, both verse and prose, could be very revealing in this regard.²⁰⁰ We must acknowledge, though, that in moving away from political history, our concerns are completely different from those of the saga authors.

¹⁹⁹ I should make it clear that I do not single out these historians in order to criticise their work, which has great merit for the kinds of history that they focus on; their names are given simply because they are among the most eminent currently practising historians of Norway, and also because their approaches to the problems stated here could fairly be said to be representative of current historical approaches to medieval Norwegian history altogether.

²⁰⁰ Similarly also Bibire (2007).

APPENDIX: ÞORMÓÐR KOLBRÚNARSKÁLD
AFTER THE BATTLE OF STIKLARSTAÐIR

A1: FbS²⁰¹

Svá er sagt, þá er lokit var bardaganum, at Þormóðr væri ekki sárr. Hann harmaði þat mjök ok mælti: “Þat ætla ek nú, at ekki muna ek til þeirar gistingar, sem konungr í kveld; en verra þykki mér nú at lifa en deyja.” Ok í því bili, er hann mælti þetta, þá fló qr at Þormóði ok kom fyrir brjóst honum, ok vissi hann eigi, hvaðan at kom. Því sári varð hann feginn, því at hann þóttisk vita, at þetta sár mun honum at bana verða. Hann gengr til einnar bygghlōðu, þar er margir konungsmenn váru inni sárir. Kona ein vermdi vatn í katli til þess at þvá sár manna. Þormóðr gengr at einum vandbálk ok styzk þar við. Konan mælti við Þormóð, “Hvárt ertu konungsmaðr, eða ert af bóndaliði?” Þormóðr kvað vísu [v. 36]:

Á sér, at vér vǫrum
vígrefr með Áleifi,
sár fekk heldr at hvǫru
hvítungs ok frið lítinn;
skínn á skildi mínum,
skald fekk hrið til kalda,
nær hafa eskiaskar
qrvendan mik gǫrvan.

Konan mælti: “Hví lætr þú eigi binda sár þín, ef þú ert nǫkkut sárr?” Þormóðr svarar: “Þau ein hefi ek sár, at eigi þarf at binda.” Konan mælti: “Hverir gengu bezt fram með konunginum í dag?” Þormóðr segir [v. 37]:

Haraldr vas bitr at berjask
bǫðrefr með Áleifi;
þar gekk harðra hjǫrva
Hringr ok Dagr at þingi;
réðusk þeir und rauðar
randar þrútt at standa
—fekk benþiðurr blakkan
bjór—dǫglingar fjórir.

Konan spurði þa enn Þormóð: “Hversu gekk konungrinn fram?” Þormóðr kvað vísu [v. 38]:

Qrt vas Áleifs hjarta,
óð fram konungr blóði,

²⁰¹ Fbs: 268–75, vv. 36–40 (Viðar Hreinsson et al., trans. 1997b: 393–5, vv. 32–6; 399–402, vv. 40–4). Note that v. 39 and its prose context are in an alternative recension of the saga in *Flateyjarbók*, which I do not reproduce here; the *Flateyjarbók* version is closer to the narrative of *Ólhelg* than *Hkr*.

rekin bitu stól, á Stiklar
 stöðum, kvaddi lið bōðvar;
 élþolla sák alla
 Jalfaðs, nema gram sjalfan
 —reyndr vas flestr—í fastri
 fleindrifu sér hlífa.

[There follows a dialogue—completely in prose—between Þormóðr and a man who, on hearing the moans of the wounded men, says that it is hardly surprising that the king lost, given how lacking in courage his men are. Þormóðr invites this man to inspect his own wound, and as the man comes closer, the skald strikes him with an axe, upon which his interlocutor begins to yell. After this interlude, proving a point about how even brave, strong men feel pain, Þormóðr begins to fade from life, and speaks his last verse in response to another question asked by the woman:]

Nú er Þormóðr mælti þetta, stóð hann við vandbálkinn, þann er í bygghlōðunni var. Ok er lokit var rœðu þeira, þá mælti konan, sú er vatnit vermdi, við Þormóð: “Hví ertu svá fōlr, maðr, ok litlauss sem nár, eða hví lætr þú eigi binda sár þín?” Þormóðr kvað vísu því. 40].²⁰²

Emkak rauðr, en rjóðum
 ræðr grōnn kona manni;
 járn stendr fast et forna
 fenstígi mér benja;
 þat veldr mér, en mæra
 marglóðar nú tróða,
 djúp ok danskra vápna
 Dagshríðar spor—

[the editors include the last word here, but I have omitted it, following the *Flateyjarbók* version, so that the narrative that follows makes sense].

Ok er hann hafði þetta mælt, þá dó hann standandi við balkinn ok fell til jarðar dauðr. Haraldr Sigurðarson fyllði vísu þá, er Þormóðr hafði kveðit; hann lagði þetta við: “svíða,—svá mundi hann vilja kveða, ‘Dags hríðar spor svíða’.”

It is said that when the battle was over, Þormóðr was not wounded. This hurt him greatly, and he said: “I think now that I will not go to the night quarters with the king in the evening; for it seems worse to me now to live than to die.” And in the moment when he said this, an arrow flew at Þormóðr and struck him in his chest, and he did not know whence it came. He was happy with such a wound, for it seemed to him certain that

²⁰² V. 39 is contained only in the *Flateyjarbók* manuscript; it is also in *Ólhelg* and *Hkr*, and the former version is reproduced below as *Ólhelg* v. 61.

this wound would be the death of him. He went to a barley-barn inside which there were many wounded men of the king. A woman was heating water in a cauldron to wash the men's wounds. Þormóðr went to a partitioning wall and leaned himself against it. The woman said to Þormóðr, "Are you one of the king's men, or are you of the farmers' army?" Þormóðr spoke this verse [v. 36]:

It can be seen that we were rejoicing in battle with Óláfr; I got quite a wound, however, from a sword, and little peace. There was a shine on my shield, the skald endured a storm in the cold; the spear-trees [= warriors] have almost made me left-handed

The woman said: "Why don't you let me bind your wound, if you are somewhat hurt?" Þormóðr answered: "I only have those wounds that have no need to be bound." The woman said: "Who was foremost in the battle with the king today?" Þormóðr answered [v. 37]:

Haraldr was sharp, battle-joyous, in fighting alongside Óláfr; Hringr and Dagr went to the meeting of hard swords [= battle]; gallant, four noble princes decided to take a stand under red shields—the wound-partridge [= bird of prey] got its dark beer [= blood].

The woman asked Þormóðr further: "How did the king bear himself [in the battle]?" Þormóðr spoke a verse [v. 38]:

Óláfr's heart was strong; the king was frantic at Stiklarstaðir—the driven steel bit into blood—he called the troop to battle. Except for the prince himself, I saw the trees of Jalfaðr's [= Óðinn's] hailstones [Óðinn's hailstones = battle; its trees (that is, those who stand in it) = warriors] shelter themselves against the thick shower [of spears]—all were tested.
[...]

While Þormóðr said this, he was standing against the wall, which was in the barley-barn. And when this speech was concluded, the same woman who was heating the water said to Þormóðr: "Man, why are you so pale, and colourless like a corpse? And why don't you let me bind your wound?" Þormóðr spoke this verse [v. 40]:

I am not red, but the slender woman speaks to a red-bearded man; the old swamp-wandering iron [iron that wanders in the swamp of blood = arrow-head] stands firm in my wounds; that deep track of Dagr's storm and Danish weapons, tree of the embers of the sea [embers of the sea = gold; tree (= bearer of) gold = lady] now causes me—

And when he had spoken this verse, he died standing up against the wall and fell dead to the ground. Haraldr Sigurðarson completed the verse that

Þormóðr had spoken, he added this word: “to be in pain”—this is what he would have wanted to say: “the track of Dagr’s storm [causes me] to be in pain”.

A2: Ólhelg²⁰³

Þormóðr lec laus við i bardaganom oc fecc æigi stor sar, sem hann undraðe sialfr, oc þikcizt æigi hava lift ser. Þa kallaðe maðr: “Le mer skiolldenn.” “Tak þu”, sagðe hann, “aigi þarf ek.” Hann þakcaðe hanum. Þormóðr læypr ivir skiðgarð nokcon oc mællte, kvaz ugga, at hann mindi æigi falla með kononge sinum. Oc i þui kom skot undir hond hanum vinstri, krokor æinn milli rivianna, oc mællte: “Ængi dro bætra hæilli sina boga”, sagðe hann, “nu vænte ek, at ek skilizc æigi við konongenn,” oc braut af skaftet af orenne oc sættiz niðr.

[Þormóðr now overhears a dialogue between two wounded warriors, who both die after they finish speaking; this episode is not in the other accounts].

Þormóðe ohægðezt miok saren. Þar varo oc marger aðrer sarer. Kona æin gecc i mote Þormóðe með vazfatu. Kimbi het, sa er binnda skilldi um sar manna, alldraðr maðr oc ængi ræystimaðr veret oc otrur veret kallaðr. Þormóðr fecc ækci rum hia durunum, stoð ihia vandbælki nokcorom oc studizc afra. Nu var røtt, hværir bæzt gengo fram, oc urðu menn æigi asatter. Giængr kona hia Þormóðr oc spurði, með huarom er hann være. Hann svarar:

[v. 58, *Á sér, at vér vǫrum* follows, with minor variations from *FbS* v. 36].

Konan spyr, hværir bæzt værdisk með konongenom af hans liði. Þa quað hann enn:

[v. 59, *Haralldr sa ek at væl varðezc* follows; despite some variation in the first two lines, this is essentially the same as v. 37 of *FbS*].

Hon spurði, hvesso konongrenn genge fram. Hann sagðe:

[v. 60, *Qrt vas Áleifs hjarta* follows; this is essentially the same as v. 38 of *FbS*].

[This verse is, as in *FbS*, followed by the dialogue with Kimbi (who has here, however, already been introduced). Unlike in the other work, *Ólhelg* does not report Kimbi’s words, telling us only that Þormóðr reprimands him for insulting the king’s men; there follows a brief altercation and Þormóðr then chops off Kimbi’s hand. After this, the skald encounters a young man who had fought on the opposing side; Þormóðr stabs him with a dagger, and responds to the man’s pain by saying he ought to bear it like a man. Soon

²⁰³ *Ólhelg*: 198–205, vv. 58–62.

after, the man dies. The Kimbi episode is here therefore distributed amongst two of Þormóðr's interlocutors].

Þormóðr mæter kono æinni, oc hafðe við i fange. Oc er hon ser Þormod, þa kastar hon niðr viðinum oc sægir dauða menn ganga. Hann kvezk æigi dauðr vera. Fleccr æinn var komenn a næf hanum. Hann kveðr visu [v. 61]:

Vndrar æglis landa
æik at ver sem blæikir
far værðr fagr af sarom
fann ek orvadrif svanne.
Mik flaug malmr enn dækcve
magne kæyrðr i giægnum
hvast bæit hiartat næsta
hætlect iarn er ec vænte.

[This verse is given as v. 161 in *Hkr*, and v. 39 in the *Flateyjarbók* version of *FbS*].

"Hvat er þer at mæini, goðr maðr?" sægir hon. Hann svarar:

[v. 62, *Emkak rjóðr, en rjóðum* is very close to v. 40 in the *Flatyjarbók* version of *FbS*, with no variations of importance for our purposes from *FbS* v. 40 cited above; it is followed, with minor variations, by *Hkr* v. 160]

Hann syndi saret oc var sollet miok. Konan spyrr, hvesso or skal koma orenne. 'Sker or', sægir hann, "eða spænn um tongenne oc kipp sva or sarenu, at æigi slae harundenne saman." "Eigi þore ek þat gera", sagðe hon. "Sker holldet", sægir hann, "eða fa mer tongena." Hann dregr at ser orena oc mællte: "Gott er þessom karle um hiartat, oc þat æigum ver kononge varom at launa." Læggr bringuna a vandbolkenn oc andaðezk þa.

Þormóðr was lithe in the battle and got no severe wound, so that he was himself amazed, as he did not think he had particularly protected himself. A man called out to him then: "Lend me your shield". "Take it", he said, "I don't need it." The man thanked him. Þormóðr jumped over a wooden fence and said that he feared that he would not fall with his king. And in that moment a shot struck him under his left arm, a barb between his ribs, and he said: "No one drew his bow better", he said, "now I expect that I shall not be separated from the king," and he broke off the shaft of the arrow and sat down.

[...]

The wound inconvenienced Þormóðr greatly. There were many other wounded men there. A woman went up to Þormóðr with a bucket of water. Kimbi was the name of the man who was supposed to bind the wounds of the men, he was an old man and not bold, and was called unfaithful. Þormóðr found no space at the door, he stood leaning against

a certain partitioning wall. People spoke about who had been most courageous and men did not agree about it. The woman went beside Þormóðr and asked with whom he had been. He answered:

[v. 58; see the translation of v. 36 in *FbS* above]

The woman asked who of the king's men fought the best him. And then he said:

[v. 59; see the translation of v. 38 in *FbS* above]

She asked how courageously the king fought. He said:

[v. 60; see the translation of v. 38 in *FbS* above]

[The Kimbi episode follows.]

Þormóðr met a woman, who was carrying firewood in her arms. And when she saw Þormóðr, she threw down the firewood and said dead men were walking. He said that he was not dead. There was a fleck on his nose. He recited the stanza [v. 61]:

The oak of the hands of the hawk [= lady] wonders why we are so pale.
Few become fair from wounds. I felt, lady, the flight of the arrows. The dark
metal, shot with force, flew at me. I think that the dangerous iron bites sharp
at my heart.

"What sort of injury do you have, good man?" she said. He answered:

[v. 62; see the translation of v. 40 in *FbS* above]

He showed the wound, which was very swollen. The woman asked how the arrow would come out. "Cut it out", he said, "or grip it with forceps and pull it out of the wound in such a way that the skin does not close over it." "I cannot dare to do that", she said. "Cut the flesh", he said, "or give me the forceps." He pulled at the arrow and said: "It's going well for this man around his heart, and we have to thank the king for that." He leant his chest against the wall and died there.

A₃: Hkr²⁰⁴

Þormóðr Kolbrúnarskáld var í orrostu undir merkjum konungs. Ok er konungr var fallin ok atsókn var sem óðust, þá fell konungslíð hvat við annat, en þeir váru flestir sárir, er upp stóðu. Þormóðr varð sárr mjök. Gerði hann þá sem aðrir, at allir opuðu þar frá, er mestr þótti lífsháski, en sumir

²⁰⁴ *Hkr* II: 389–93, vv. 159–61 (*HkrH*: 518–21).

runnu. Þá hófsk sú orrosta, er Dagshríð er kölluð. Sótti þá þangat til allt konungslíðit, þat er vápnfært var, en Þormóðr kom þá ekki í orrustu, því at hann var þá óvigr bæði af sárum ok af mœði, ok stóð hann þar hjá félogum sinum, þótt hann mætti ekki annat at hafask. Þá var hann lostinn með gru í síðuna vinstri. Braut hann af sér orvarskaptit ok gekk þá brot frá orrostu ok heim til húsanna ok kom at hlöðu nökkuri. Var þat mikit hús. Þormóðr hafði sverð bert í hendi. Ok er hann gekk inn, þá gekk maðr út í móti honum. [There follows here the dialogue with Kimbi, the man who taunts the kings' warriors for their moans]. Fór Kimbi brot, en Þormóðr settisk niðr í hlöðunni ok sat þar um hríð ok heyrði á ræður manna. Þat var mælt þar mest, at hvern sagði þat, er sét þóttisk hafa í orrostu, ok rætt um framgöngur manna. Lofuðu sumir mest hreysti Óláfs konungs, en sumir nefndu aðra menn till ekki síðr. Þá kvað Þormóðr:

[v. 159, *Ort vas Áleifs hjarta*, follows, with minor variations from v. 38 of *FbS*]

Þormóðr gekk síðan í brot til skemmu nökkurrar, gekk þar inn. Váru þar áðr margir menn inni fyrir sárir mjök. Var þar at kona nökkur, ok batt um sár manna. Eldr var á gólfinu, ok vermði hon vatn til at fægja sárin. En Þormóðr settisk niðr við dyrr útar. Þar gekk annar maðr út, en annarr inn, þeir er störfuðu at sárum mǫnnum. Þá snøri einn hverr at Þormóði ok sá á hann ok mælti síðan: "Hví ertu svá fǫlr? Ertu sárr, eða fyrir hví biðr þú þér eigi lækningar?" Þormóðr kváð þá vísu:

[v. 160, *Emkak rjóðr, en rjóðum*, follows, with some variations from v. 40 of *FbS*; the *Hkr* version is closer to that of *Ólhelg*, and is also in the *Flateyjarbók* recension of *FbS*]

Síðan stóð Þormóðr upp ok gekk inn at eldinum ok stóð þar um hríð. Þá mælti lækni­rinn til hans: "Þú, maðr, gakk út ok tak mér skíðin, er hér liggja fyrir durum úti." Hann gekk út, bar inn skíðafangit ok kastaði niðr á gólf­it. Þá sá lækni­rinn í andlit honum ok mælti: "Furðu bleikr er þessi maðr. Hví ertu slíkr?" Þá kvað Þormóðr

[v. 161 follows; this verse, and much of the following prose, is transmitted as v. 39 and its accompanying prose in the *Flateyjarbók* version of *FbS*, and is almost identical to v. 61 of *Ólhelg* cited above].

Þá mælti lækni­rinn: "Láttu mik sjá sár þín, ok mun ek veita umbǫnd." Síðan settisk hann niðr ok kastaði klæðum af sér. En er lækni­r sá sár hans, þá leitaði hon um þat sár, er hann hafði á síðunni, kenndi þess, at þar stóð járn í, en þat vissi hon eigi til vís, hvert járnit hafði snúit. Hon hafði þar gort í steinkatli, stappat lauk ok qnnur grös ok vellt þat saman ok gaf at eta inum sárum mǫnnum ok reyndi svá, hvárt þeir hefði holsár, því at kenndi af laukinum út ór sári því, er á hol var. Hon bar þat at Þormóði, bað hann eta. Hann svarar: "Ber brot. Ekki hefi ek grautsótt." Síðan tók hon spennitǫng ok vildi draga út járnit, en þat var fast ok gekk hvergi, stóð ok lítit út, því at sárit var sollit. Þá mælti Þormóðr: "Sker þú til járn­sins, svá at vel megi ná með tǫnginni, fá mér síðan ok lát mik kippa." Hon gerði sem hann mælti. Þá

tók Þormóðr gullhring af hendi sér ok fekk læknum, bað hana gera af slíkt, er hon vildi. “Góðr er nauðr at,” segir hann: “Óláfr konungr gaf mér hring þenna í morgin.” Síðan tók Þormóðr tǫngina ok kippði á brot ǫrinni. En þar váru á krókar, ok lágu á tágur af hjartanu, sumar rauðar, sumar hvítar, ok er hann sá þat, mælti hann: “Vel hefir konungrinn alit oss. Feitt er mér enn um hjartarœtr.” Síðan hné hann aptr ok var þá dauðr.

Þormóðr Kólbrúnarskáld was in the battle under the banner of the king. And when the king had fallen and the battle raged most furiously, the king’s army fell, one after another, and most of those who remained standing were wounded. Þormóðr got a great wound. He did as the others when they all retreated from the place that seemed to be extremely dangerous, and some fled running. Then that battle began that is called Dagshríð [Dagr’s Storm]. All the king’s men who were able to bear arms advanced thither, but Þormóðr did not enter the battle, since he was unable to fight both because of his wounds and his exhaustion, and he stood there beside his comrades, although he could do nothing else. He had been struck by an arrow in his left side. He broke off the shaft of the arrow and then he went away from the battle and went homewards to a farmstead and came to a certain barn. That was a great farmstead. Þormóðr had a bare sword in his hand. And as he went inside, a man came out to meet him. [The dialogue with Kimbi follows]. Kimbi went away and Þormóðr sat down in the barn and sat for a while and listened to the men talking. They conversation was mainly that each man said what he thought he had seen in the battle and spoke about the courage of the men. Some praised the valour of King Ólaf the most, and some praised other men no less. Then Þormóðr spoke:

[v. 159; see the translation of *FbS* v. 38]

After this, Þormóðr went away to a certain shed, and went inside. There were already many men there who were severely wounded. A certain woman was there who bound the wounds of the men. There was a fire on the floor, and she was heating water to cleanse the wounds. Þormóðr sat down near the entrance against the door. Men who were attending to the wounded men went in and out. Then one of them turned to Þormóðr and looked at him and said: “Why are you so pale? Are you wounded? Why do you not ask for treatment?” Þormóðr spoke this verse:

[v. 160; see the translation of *FbS* v. 40]

After this Þormóðr stood up and went inside to the fire and stood there for a while. Then the [woman-]physician spoke to him: “You, man, go outside

and get me the firewood that is lying outside before the door." He went out and brought in an armful of logs and cast them down on the floor. Then the physician looked at his face and said: "This man is extremely pale. Why are you so pale?" Then Þormóðr said:

[v. 161; see the translation of *Ólhelg* v. 61]

Then the physician said: "Let me look at your wound, and I will bandage it." He sat down and removed his clothes. But when the physician saw his wound and she examined around the wound that he had in his side, she perceived that iron was lodged there, but she did not know for certain which way it had gone [inside his body]. She had mashed garlic and other herbs and cooked them together in a stone kettle and she gave that to the wounded men to drink and examined whether they had wounds that caused cavities in their bodies; she was able to tell from the [smell of the] garlic coming out of the wounds if there was a cavity. She brought this to Þormóðr and asked him to drink. He answered: "Take it away. I do not have porridge-fever." Then she took a forceps and wanted to pull out the iron, but it was firmly lodged and would not move, and only a little of it stuck out, since the wound was swollen. Then Þormóðr said: "Cut in to the iron, so that you can grip it with the forceps, then give them to me and let me pull it out." She did as he said. Then Þormóðr took the golden ring from his hand and gave it to the physician and told her to do with it as she wished. "It is a good gift," he said: "King Óláfr gave me this ring in the morning." Then Þormóðr took the forceps and pulled out the arrow. And there were barbs on it, and fibres of his heart were on them, some red, and some white, and when he saw that, he said: "The king has fed us well. There is still fat at the roots of my heart." And then he sank down and was dead.

CHAPTER THREE

NON-NATIVE SOURCES AND INFLUENCE

The Anglo-Norman Background

While the nature of the relationship of verse to prose and the methods by which verse was used as a source for historical narrative remain, for the most part, unclear, considerable progress has been made with regard to elucidating the use of non-native sources for Scandinavian historiography; less has been done as yet in interpreting the functions of non-Scandinavian influences. Sources can be defined here either as direct quotations, requiring a correspondence in wording between the putative source and the Scandinavian text; or as material that is so closely analogous to non-native works or cannot derive from native tradition, that it must be traced back to a non-native source. Influence is a rather more slippery concept to define; here I use it to mean the ways in which saga authors might have learnt to view the past and structure their narratives from a knowledge of non-native texts, without necessarily including any actual material from those sources in their works.

Predictably, the Latin histories have long been found to contain traces of a number of foreign works from antiquity and the middle ages;¹ for the most part, these links between the Scandinavian texts and their non-native sources are only in the form of a few, often distorted citations, and little effort has been expended to understand what function such quotations

¹ On Theodoricus: Johnsen (1939), and Hanssen (1945; 1949) are basic. More recent studies are Karlsen and Vatsend (2003); White (2005: 41–7); the extensive notes in McDougall and McDougall (trans. 1998) are indispensable. On the *HN*: Ekrem (2003); Mortensen (2003); and the notes in their edition; and White (2005: 47–53). On the biographies of Óláfr Tryggvason: Andersson (2003; 2006: 21–42); Lönnroth (1975a); White (2005: 57–79). White's work in each case essentially synthesises earlier scholarship. See further Mortensen (2005) on the influence of non-native sources with regard to geographical descriptions in Scandinavian historiography; he finds that the *HN*-author and Theodoricus were influenced primarily by Bede (Lapidge, Monaghan and Robin, eds and trans. 2005), Paul the Deacon (Bethman and Waitz, eds 1878), and Adam of Bremen, and more indirectly ultimately by Orosius (Arnaud-Lindet, ed. and trans. 1990). On the influence of non-native sources on the historical methods of *HN* and *HARN*, cf. also Foerster (2009: 96–114).

have.² Some differentiation in the use of sources does seem possible with regard to the Latin histories: Lars Boje Mortensen shows convincingly that the author of *HN* appears to have had access primarily to materials from Danish or German libraries, whereas Theodoricus's orientation was French, specifically linked to the school of St Victor in Paris;³ like Theodoricus, it seems possible (as Lars Lönnroth has suggested) that Oddr Snorrason and Gunnlaugr Leifsson relied to some extent on French traditions of Charlemagne when composing their histories.⁴ Significantly, Paul White is able to show that both Theodoricus and the *HN*-author might also have had access to Anglo-Norman sources, with the former perhaps using William of Malmesbury's *Gesta regum Anglorum* (completed c.1127),⁵ and the latter apparently quoting some early version of the *Liber de legibus* interpolated into Roger of Hoveden's *Chronica* (c.1201)⁶ and a (possibly adapted, now Scandinavian) tradition about Merlin, deriving ultimately also from an insular source.⁷ The verbal parallels noted by White are often very minimal indeed, and it is quite possible—perhaps even the most likely explanation—that similarities in all these cases are based not on direct knowledge of the insular authors, but on some sort of excerpt collection available in Norway, or on an oral tradition deriving from the insular writers. Whatever the case might be, the possibility of a link with Anglo-Norman traditions resurfaces in later texts too, and is probably of great importance.⁸

² Regarding the function of the verse cited in Theodoricus, Hanssen finds that Theodoricus's digressions are needless (1949); Bagge suggests, more plausibly, that the digressions in Theodoricus (as in other, non-Scandinavian historical works) served a moral function, and might have also been a kind of prefiguration of events in Scandinavia, thus helping to explain the native events (1989). O'Donoghue concurs, suggesting that in Theodoricus, as in many Norse and Norman histories, the verse serves a moral function (2005: 20). Bagge is followed by Foerster (2009: 96–114), who finds that the use of (verse and prose) citations serve to place Norway in a larger context of Christian, European history going back to Rome.

³ Mortensen (2000a); see also Mortensen (2003; 2005).

⁴ Lönnroth (1975a). Given that Saxo, working from material in Danish libraries, was also influenced by French sources, Mortensen's suggestion (2000a) that the author of *HN* might have had access to the archiepiscopal library at Lund seems not to be fully plausible: presumably some evidence of the French connection would have been preserved here, and would have seeped into *HN* too.

⁵ Mynors, Thomson and Winterbottom (eds and trans. 1998).

⁶ Stubbs (ed. 1868–71, i: 215–41).

⁷ White (2005: 44–53).

⁸ It is worth mentioning here Magnús Fjalldal's study of depictions of Anglo-Saxon England in Old Norse (2005); a useful survey of the material, this is, however, more concerned with establishing the extent of knowledge about pre-Conquest England, rather

It is scarcely surprising that authors of Latin texts would have known other Latin texts that were not written in Scandinavia, and I do not rehearse in any detail the suggested connections here, focusing instead on the more controversial question of non-native influence on the vernacular works. However, even for the latter subject, the connections between Latin Scandinavian histories and other European traditions are not without import; one useful implication of the source criticism of the Latin works is that during the course of the twelfth century, historians in Norway and Iceland had access, either during their time as students abroad, or in their own libraries, to a fairly wide range of classical, patristic and medieval material. The texts they would have known range from ancient and early medieval historians such as Sallust and Bede, through theological works such as the *Dialogues* of Gregory the Great, to relatively recent historical works such as William of Malmesbury's *Gesta regum Anglorum* and Honorius of Autun's *Imago Mundi*.⁹ Although many of the putative sources might not have been correctly identified by the Scandinavian historians, and might have reached them in excerpt collections, or even in some sort of oral form,¹⁰ the parallels are strong enough to prove that clerical historians in twelfth-century Scandinavia were not isolated from the mainstream of scholarship in England and on the continent. As we shall see, given that the vernacular Norse texts were also closely associated in some way or another with monastic communities, the extent of clerical knowledge of European Latin traditions implies the possibility, at least, of similar knowledge among the authors of the compendia.

White's monograph presents the most comprehensive work to date to examine non-native influences and interactions, especially with Anglo-Norman historical traditions, and his study has potentially wide-ranging implications.¹¹ Apart from rehearsing the arguments regarding non-native sources of the Latin works and adding a few suggestions of his own,¹² White presents a number of new ideas regarding the Latin sources of the compendia,¹³ which, because of the language they are in, their use of

than with examining potential connections between Norse and other historiographic traditions.

⁹ Flint (ed. 1983).

¹⁰ This is suggested by Mortensen (2000b): written texts could be passed on in simplified, even translated oral retellings.

¹¹ White (2005). For a basic introduction to Anglo-Norman historical writing, see Van Houts (2003).

¹² White (2005: 41–55): the synoptics; (2005: 57–79): Oddr's saga of Óláfr Tryggvason.

¹³ White (2005: 81–109).

skaldic verse, and the persistent belief in Icelandic uniqueness, have so far remained largely free of suggestions linking them to foreign works. Before White, Bruce Gelsinger and Shaun Hughes had argued that the strategy described in *Hkr* (and to a lesser extent *Msk*) in their narration of the Battle of Stamford Bridge is not present in any earlier Scandinavian text, but is very similar to depictions of battle in some continental histories, and therefore must be derived from foreign sources.¹⁴ Neither scholar presents entirely convincing suggestions as to what these sources were, but the case for non-native influence of some sort certainly seems credible. It should be noted, though, that the tactics depicted by the compendia are, as Hughes shows, so commonly found in late-twelfth- and thirteenth-century continental narratives that they must reflect real strategies used in battle, and the Norse histories might not therefore be drawing on any specific texts, but rather on knowledge gained by Scandinavian crusaders in the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.¹⁵

White, expanding on earlier work (in particular by Kari Ellen Gade),¹⁶ finds that a number of narratives in the vernacular kings' sagas could derive from non-native sources.¹⁷ For instance, the anecdote regarding Óláfr helgi Haraldsson's fall when he arrives in Norway could be drawn from William of Malmesbury's account of William the Bastard,¹⁸ but also, perhaps, from one of many antique sources, as suggested by Moberg.¹⁹

¹⁴ Gelsinger (1988); Hughes (1988); neither author is cited by White (2005).

¹⁵ See also Magnús Fjalldal (2005: 56–64) for a detailed survey of the Norse narratives regarding Stamford Bridge and Hastings and their historical reliability; while his negative judgement on the veracity of the Norse sources is doubtless generally sound (though some possible exceptions are noted below), the author does not consider the possibility—or the implications of such a possibility—that the Norse material might itself derive from Norman sources, many of which are as inaccurate as the Norse texts, when compared to Anglo-Saxon contemporary accounts. For example, Orderic Vitalis agrees with the Scandinavian traditions in stating that Tostig was the older brother of Harold Godwinsson; the fact that this inaccurate information is conveyed by the Norse histories does not militate against the possibility of their influence by non-native sources, and in fact suggests a knowledge of Orderic (on Tostig, cf. below at nn. 41–4).

¹⁶ Gade (1997; 2000a; 2004).

¹⁷ White (2005: 93–109).

¹⁸ White (2005: 86–7), following von See (1976: 2–5).

¹⁹ Moberg (1940–2: 555–9); the suggested sources are Suetonius, Valerius Maximus, and Frontinus. The earliest Norse text is *Ólhelg*: 66–7: “Þa gengo þeir upp a æyna. Stæig konongrenn þar aðrum fæte, sem var læira, oc stæypizt aðrum fæte a kne. Þa mællte konongrenn: ‘Fell ec nu.’ Þa svaraðe Rane: ‘Æigi felltu, hærra, hælldr fæstir þu nu fætr i Norege.’ Konongrenn lo at oc mællte: ‘Ef guð vill at gerezc gangn.’” (“Then they went up onto the island. The king stepped with one foot where there was clay, but he stumbled and fell on his other knee. Then he spoke: ‘Now I fell.’ Then Rani said: ‘You did not fall, Lord, now you set foot firmly in Norway’. The king laughed and said: ‘If god wills that it should be [to my]

Gade and White agree that in general, *Hkr* seems to prefer William of Malmesbury's accounts of Stamford Bridge and Hastings, whereas the author of *Msk* seems closer to continental Norman sources, particularly Orderic Vitalis (who did, however, spend some amount of time in England), but also William of Poitiers and the *Gesta Normannorum ducum* originally written by William of Jumièges.²⁰ There are also very close parallels between a number of the stories about Haraldr Sigurðarson's exploits in the Mediterranean and earlier Norman sources (none of these stories cites any verse).²¹ In one such passage, reminiscent of the narrative given

advantage.'"). Note the alliteration in the direct speech of both king (on 'g') and retainer (on 'f' and 'h'); this is unlikely to have been derived from any known written source, but is also most likely to be an addition by a later narrator or author. *Fsk*: 170 (*FskF*: 137) and *Hkr* II: 36 (*HkrH*: 265) repeat this passage almost verbatim, but changed in such a way that there is only an alliteration on 'f' in retainer's speech, and none at all in Óláfr's words. William of Malmesbury's text reads as follows (Mynors, Thomson and Winterbottom, eds 1998: 450–1): "In egressu naus pede lapsus euentum in melius commutauit, acclamante sibi proximo milite: 'Tenēs' inquit 'Angliam, comes, rex futurus'" ("Having fallen to his feet in disembarking from the ship, he turned this event into a good one, with the knight next to him exclaiming: 'You hold England, Count, and king to be'"). Thomson and Winterbottom note that "only William has this story, which suspiciously parallels that of Julius Caesar's arrival in Africa as told in Suetonius" (1999: 230); the Suetonius passage is as follows: "prolapsus etiam in egressu naus uerso ad melius ominē: 'teneo te,' inquit, 'Africa'" (Ihm, ed. 1933, *Div. Iul.* 59: "Although he had fallen while disembarking from the ship, he interpreted the omen positively: 'I hold you, Africa,' he said"). This episode is paralleled in Scandinavian sources by Haraldr Sigurðarson's fall off his horse before the battle of Stamford Bridge, which he is said in the compendia to have interpreted as a good omen: *Msk*: 274 (*MskAG*: 269): "Haralldr konvngr Sigurðarson reið fyr framan fyllking sína svortom hesti blesottom. oc forvitnaþisc hversu líþit stoð. oc visapi til ef hann villdi framarr í nocqvorom stað vera lata. oc i þesi reiþ fell hestrinn vndir konungi. oc hann fram oc af melti. Fall er farar heill" ("King Haraldr Sigurðarson rode up in front of his troops on his black horse with a white mark on its forehead, and examined how the army was positioned and indicated where he wanted them brought forward in any particular position. And as he rode, the horse fell under the king, and he fell off its back, and said: 'A fall is good for the faring'"). *Fsk*: 282 (*FskF*: 225) and *Hkr* III: 186 (*HkrH*: 653) repeat this almost verbatim. In contrast, *HARN* and *Ágrip* have Haraldr viewing his fall as a bad omen: *HARN*: 57, ll. 3–7 (McDougall and McDougall, trans. 1998: 45, ll. 23–31): "Ipse vero rex Haraldus equo insidens, dum aciem ordinare curat, equo cadente in terram excussus dixisse fertur: raro, inquit, tale signum portendit victoriam; nec eum fefellit sinistrum omen, nam in eodem bello ipse occubuit" ("And King Haraldr himself, while seated on his horse arranging his troops, was thrown to the ground when his horse fell, and is reputed to have said then: 'it is rare that such a sign portends victory'. And the sinister omen did not deceive him, for he himself died in that battle"). *Ágrip*: 39 (Driscoll, ed. and trans. 1995: 56–7) repeats this almost verbatim. On the portentous fall in Norse literature, with extensive reference to parallels in Latin sources, see Moberg (1940–2), and Almqvist (1991).

²⁰ Gade (1997); White (2005: 108–9). We should note, though, that according to Andersson and Gade, many of the chronological references in *Msk* relate to the British Isles, leading them to suggest an unidentified insular source (Andersson and Gade 2000: 75–7).

²¹ White (2005: 99–106).

about the Normans in Wace's *Roman de Brut* (c.1150–c.1180),²² we are told that Haraldr used birds to set fire to a city;²³ a little later in the account of Haraldr's deeds in the south, we are told how he pretended to be dead in order to gain entrance into a city, a story that corresponds to narratives about the Norman conquests of northern Italy by William of Jumigès²⁴ and William of Apulia,²⁵ but which might ultimately themselves be influenced by Dudo of St Quentin's early eleventh-century narrative about the viking Hasting.²⁶ Tales about Haraldr burning walnuts when wood was lacking,²⁷ and having his horses shod with gold to show off his wealth to the Greeks,²⁸ also have obvious parallels in William of Jumièges's narratives about the Normans.²⁹

Despite White's suggestion that some of the more fabulous tales ultimately derived from Norman sources, we should note that stories of capturing a town by pretending to be dead, and burning a city with birds, were also present in Greek, Russian and Arabic texts, and some were indeed even in Saxo's *Gesta Danorum* and Dudo's Norman history from the early eleventh century.³⁰ Saxo could also, of course, have obtained his information from the same Latin texts suggested as sources by White, and he might have been a source for the authors of the compendia; he seems also to have known Dudo's work. The existence of these motifs in other texts suggests that even if the information is incorrect, it might not be a later addition by the Scandinavian authors, deriving from written, Latin, and probably Norman sources (possibly mediated through Saxo?). Rather, it might in fact go back to an oral prose tradition deriving from Greek

²² Weiss (ed. and trans. 2002: 13593–610).

²³ *Msk*: 69–72 (*MskAG*: 139–41); *Fsk*: 231–2 (*FskF*: 186); *Hkr* III: 76–7 (*HkrH*: 582). The Latin texts and *Msk* are cited in the Appendix to this chapter, texts A1–A3.

²⁴ Van Houts (ed. and trans. 1992–5, i: 24–5).

²⁵ Mathieu (ed. and trans. 1961: II, 337–51). The Norse texts are: *Msk*: 73–6 (*MskAG*: 141–3); *Fsk*: 232–3 (*FskF*: 186–7); *Hkr* III: 80–1 (*HkrH*: 585). The texts are cited in the Appendix to this chapter, texts B1–B5.

²⁶ Lair (ed. 1865: I, 6–7); Christiansen (trans. 1998: 19–20); the text is given in Appendix B1. Note, however, that Dudo's narrative is markedly negative about the cunning protagonist, unlike later Norman and Norse works. On Dudo and his potentially Scandinavian sources, see below, chapter three at nn. 50–1.

²⁷ *Msk*: 65–6; 350–1 (*MskAG*: 137; 324).

²⁸ *Msk*: 348 (*MskAG*: 323).

²⁹ Van Houts (ed. and trans. 1992–5, ii: 83–5; 82–3); this portion is only in the later redactions of the text, not in William's own version. The texts are cited in the Appendix to this chapter, texts C1–C2; D1–D2.

³⁰ Cf. Sigfús Blöndal and Benedikt Benediktz (1978: 71–3); the relevant passages from Saxo are cited in appendices A and B.

texts, and thus date back to the time of Haraldr's exploits in the east. However, such a derivation only means that even if the authors of the compendia had access to an oral prose tradition from the times of the events described, this prose might itself be derived from foreign sources, and not entirely credible; and at any rate, this would also be a form of non-native influence. It is worth noting, furthermore, that there is considerable variation between the various Scandinavian accounts of two of the tactics ascribed to Haraldr in the compendia, namely feigning death, and using birds to set fire to a city. Saxo provides brief narratives set in northern Europe, and his stories proceed rather differently from what is given in the compendia (in contrast, Dudo's few stories that have parallels to the later vernacular works are, like the latter, quite long, though also quite different, albeit once more set in the northern world). Among the compendia, *Msk* provides accounts that are about four times as long as the narratives presented in *Fsk* and *Hkr*, with plenty of not always very relevant detail and dialogue. It is clear, therefore, that at least the author of *Msk* or his immediate informants elaborated considerably on the non-native histories, if the latter were indeed the ultimate sources for these tales.

We should also allow for the possibility that even verse narratives might have been influenced by non-native traditions: the poetry might not be based just on eyewitness accounts, but also on stories which were heard by travellers in the east and brought back—not quite the same thing as eyewitness accounts. It seems possible that skalds of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries not only acted as routes of transmission for earlier poems, but were also influenced by non-native traditions in the production of their own works; given the number of connections established between Latin, non-native prose narratives and the Norse prose texts, it certainly does not seem impossible that some ostensibly ancient skaldic verse might have been influenced by non-native sources of some sort.³¹

³¹ On the non-native influences on twelfth- and thirteenth-century skalds, see Guðrún Nordal (2001, esp. 19–40; 117–43; 273–7); note, however, that even in this study, scarcely any precise connection can be made between an extant skaldic stanza and any known non-native source, though the learning of Icelandic clerics and their involvement in the production, transmission and patronage of skaldic verse emerges very clearly from the evidence put forth here (but cf. Cormack 2003 for a contrasting point of view). It has been suggested that one of the skaldic metres that gained popularity in the eleventh century, *hrynhent*, and the *clavis metrica* composed c.1140, *Háttalykill* (Jón Helgason and Holtsmark, eds 1941), were both influenced by Latin models, though no direct sources can be found: on *hrynhent*, see Foote (1984c: 252–3), and Whaley (ed. and trans. 1998: 80); on *Háttalykill*: Clunies Ross (2005: 155–6); Foote (1984c: 253–4); Guðrún Nordal (2001: 29–36). It is perhaps

White concludes that although the authors of the early histories did use foreign sources, they did not apparently have access to such a wide range of material as did the authors of the compendia; the latter, moreover, used specifically Norman sources, whether from the continent or from England. Furthermore, the clerical authors of the earlier works did not use as many secular histories as did the authors of the compendia.³² However, given that very few passages in the three compendia—relative to the size of the works—are derived from non-native sources, and given the much smaller scope of the synoptics, it is not really fair to state that the use of foreign sources increased as much as White would like us to believe. Moreover, Inger Ekrem points out that Ari's statement that Yngvi was Turkish has precedents in, among others, William of Jumièges, who claims, following Dudo of St Quentin, that the Danes descended from the Trojans;³³ this would imply an earlier date for knowledge of these authors in Scandinavia than White assumes.³⁴ Furthermore, Ari manifestly had access to other

worth noting here that suggestions have been made, in the context of other kinds of skaldic verse, that Norse traditions were influenced by Provençal troubadour poetry from the circle of Ermengarde of Narbonne, who was, we should note, the granddaughter of Robert Guiscard, the subject of the story narrated by William of Apulia that is suggested as a source for the Norse tales of Haraldr feigning death (on Ermengarde, her patronage network, and the political, economic and social realities in which the troubadour poetry emerged, see now the brilliant study of Cheyette (2001); see in addition Caille (2005: chapters X and XI)). The links between the skaldic poems and the works of the *trouvères*, however, are now generally accepted as being rather tenuous. Nevertheless, given the wide range of connections between Norse and Norman traditions in the kings' sagas, and the translation wholesale of French romances into Norse in the thirteenth century, perhaps it would be unwise to discount altogether the possibility of influence from non-native sources on skaldic verse. On troubadour influence on skaldic verse, see Finlay (1995), with extensive references to the earlier debates. Speculative but compelling arguments have recently been put forth on the possible Carolingian influence on very early (tenth-century) skaldic verse by Poole (2010; forthcoming), building on Clunies Ross (2007), Fuglesang (2007), and Poole (2007a), the last of which also suggests Irish influence. See also von See (1999: 193–274) for a literary history of skaldic verse within a broader European context. For a thorough comparative examination of European love-lyric—including skaldic poems—and the various possible channels of cross-fertilisation across traditions, see Dronke (1968).

³² The division between secular and ecclesiastical history is, however, to be treated with some caution: one of the 'secular' histories, that of Orderic, is a *historia ecclesiastica*, as is the work of Bede, used by Ari. Nevertheless, it is certainly true that not all histories written by clerics were equally concerned with highlighting the role of salvation history in their works; Bede is more concerned with this than is, for example, William of Malmesbury.

³³ Ekrem (2003: 195).

³⁴ Ari starts his genealogy of Norwegian kings with "Yngvi Tyrkjakonungr" (*Ísl*: 27; Grønlie, trans. 2006: 14); cf. William of Jumièges (Van Houts, ed. and trans. 1992–5, i: 14–15): "Iactant enim Troianos ex sua stirpe processisse, Antenoremque ab urbis exterminio cum duobus milibus militum et quingentis uiris ob prodicionem illius ab eo perpetrata euasisse, ac per multimodos ponti anfractus Germaniam appulisse, atque postmodum in Datia

insular (albeit pre-Norman) sources as well, as White himself points out.³⁵ Nevertheless, even if there was no marked increase in the use of foreign sources, White does seem correct in his belief that specifically Norman sources seem to have been more commonly quoted by the authors of the compendia. He suggests that “the authors of kings’ sagas in the first half of the thirteenth century wrote in deliberate imitation of the longer ‘Gesta regum,’ the lengthy histories of an entire people which had become so popular in twelfth-century Western Europe”.³⁶ The importance of Norman historiography in the study of the kings’ sagas cannot be denied: White is correct to point out that in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries, the Norman historians were among the prime movers behind the flowering in Europe of the genre (if it can be called that) of the ‘Gesta regum’ (‘deeds of kings’)—and what are kings’ sagas but ‘Gesta regum’ in the vernacular? While the suggestion of direct imitation is difficult to prove, White’s conclusions are generally also in keeping with those of Magnús Fjalldal, who argues that Icelandic authors had relatively little accurate knowledge of Anglo-Saxon affairs, and what they knew derived from foreign, and generally not Anglo-Saxon sources; the lack of historical accuracy does not, of course, in any way militate against the argument that Icelandic authors were interested in England and had access to non-native sources by which they could nourish this interest.³⁷

White and Gade have demonstrated that there are a number of instances where Norse works contain information only also given by the Norman sources: the Norse histories contain information regarding Normandy, and especially the background to the battle of Hastings, not found elsewhere apart from in the Norman works—and sometimes not even in those works.³⁸ Gade and White have argued persuasively

regnasse, eamque a quodam Danao, sue stirpis rege, Danamarcham nuncupasse” (“they boast that even the Trojans came from their lineage, and that Antenor fled after the fall of the city [Troy] on account of his betrayal of it with two thousand soldiers and five hundred men and after many digressions over the sea, landed in Germany, and afterwards reigned in Dacia; they call it Denmark after a certain Danaus, a king of his lineage”). The source is Dudo of St Quentin (Lair, ed. 1865: I,3; Christiansen, trans. 1998: 16)—himself an author who is thought to have been very interested in the Scandinavian past of the Normans, and to have adopted some elements of a vernacular saga style in his Latin history, which is, moreover, a prosimetrum (cf. below at nn. 50–1).

³⁵ White (2005: 38–41).

³⁶ White (2005: 117–18).

³⁷ Magnús Fjalldal (2005).

³⁸ White (2005); Gade (1997; 2004). In addition, many Norman histories are extraordinarily well-informed about Scandinavian history, even when it is not directly relevant to their main narrative; their information, however, does not always match that presented

that the account in *Msk* of Harold Godwinsson's promise to William the Bastard, that he would not claim England for himself, must derive from a Norman source, most probably a compilation that conflated the *Gesta Normannorum ducum* and Orderic Vitalis's *Historia ecclesiastica*.³⁹ In this case, some differentiation among the compendia in their use of sources can be discerned: *Msk*'s account of the prelude to Hastings follows continental Norman traditions, whereas *Hkr* follows an insular Norman source, William of Malmesbury.

The narratives regarding Tostig, the brother of Harold Godwinsson who supported Haraldr at Stamford Bridge, also show a particular interest in English history on the part of the Norse writers, with some measure of independence from Norman and Anglo-Saxon traditions in their reports. White finds that in contrast to most non-Scandinavian accounts, *Ágrip*, *Msk* and *Hkr* state that Tostig was not expelled by Edward the Confessor,

by the Norse sources. As is apparent from the work of Van Houts, this is particularly true of Dudo of St Quentin and William of Jumièges (1983); see also in thos context Amory (1978; 1979). William of Malmesbury and Orderic Vitalis also present plenty of information about Scandinavia that is not (at least at first glance) directly relevant to their themes. On Norman perceptions of Scandinavia, see also Musset (1975); on contacts between Normans and Norwegians, see further the brief survey of Bandlien (2006). The use and function of Scandinavia in Norman historiography is a subject that merits further detailed examination.

³⁹ Gade (1997); followed by White (2005: 102–4). The texts are as follows: *Msk*: 285 (*MskAG* 277): “oc a þat ofan svarþi Haralldr iarl Vilhialmi iarli eiða at scrini Odmarus at hann scyllði alldregi vera i moti honom” (“and in addition Earl Harold swore an oath to Earl William on the relics of Odmarus that he would never oppose him”). A number of Norman sources mention this oath; only William of Poitiers and Orderic Vitalis also mention, like *Msk*, that William attached the relics to his battle standard at Hastings: William of Poitiers (Davis and Chibnall, eds and trans. 1998: 124–5): “Appendit etiam humili collo suo reliquias, quarum fauorem Heraldus abalienauerat sibi, uiolata fide quam super eas jurando sanxerat” (“At his humble neck he hung the relics whose favour Harold had estranged from himself, having violated the oath which he had sanctified by swearing over them”); Orderic (Chibnall, ed. and trans. 1969–80, ii: 172–3): “reliquiasque sanctas super quas Heraldus iurauerat collo suo humiliter appendit” (“and hung the relics over which Harold had sworn an oath humbly at his neck”). The matter of the exact content of the oath, and how it was related to Harold's betrothal to William's daughter (cf. n. 49 below) is rather complicated, but need not detain us here long; all that needs to be noted is that there were various versions of the oath, some of which linked it to the betrothal, and others that did not, and in some cases (followed by *Msk*) the betrothal has nothing to do with either the oath or the motive for William's invasion, whereas in other Norman sources (followed by *Hkr*), the betrothal is one of the key motivations behind William's setting out for war. The sources are discussed in minute detail by Freeman (1875: 227–30; 241–55; 677–707). Although now outdated, Freeman's thoroughness on this period of English history is unmatched by later surveys; see, however, Huscroft (2009) for an up-to-date introduction to the Norman conquest and its background, and Baxter (2009) for a useful discussion of the controversies surrounding the succession.

but by Harold Godwinsson after Edward's death; such a report is otherwise contained only in Orderic's history. Furthermore, it is possible that in some cases the Norse account might even be more plausible than the Norman reports: in a fascinating recent analysis of the Scandinavian accounts of the background to Stamford Bridge, Gade has shown that all the Scandinavian sources—unlike any other texts, Anglo-Saxon or Norman—provide reasonably detailed reports of Tostig's communications with Haraldr Sigurðarson before the latter's English campaign.⁴⁰ The Scandinavian narratives (excluding *HARN*) state that Tostig personally went to Norway to obtain support from Haraldr Sigurðarson; the only non-Scandinavian source to concur is Orderic Vitalis.⁴¹ The compendia send Tostig to Denmark, and thence to Norway, whereas the Danish interlude is elided by the synoptics, and also by Orderic. Based on the chronology provided by the *ASC* and John of Worcester, Gade finds that it would be impossible for Tostig to have gone to Norway (or Denmark). While she therefore deems these aspects of the Scandinavian narratives unreliable, she believes that *Msk*'s unique report of an alternative tradition, that Tostig sent an ambassador to Haraldr,⁴² solves the problems posed by the fact that the *ASC* and John of Worcester both know of communication

⁴⁰ Gade (2004).

⁴¹ For the texts relating to Tostig's movements, see Appendix E1–E4. Note that unlike the synoptics, all the compendia have Tostig first approaching Sveinn of Denmark for support, before turning to Haraldr Sigurðarson. Neither *Ágrip* nor *HARN* explicitly state that Tostig was dispossessed by Harold; *HARN* also differs from *Ágrip* in not stating that Tostig personally went to Norway to meet Haraldr, though it does say that they both arrived in Northumbria together. *Ágrip*'s version thus lies somewhere between that given by *HARN* and the narratives of the compendia (Gade 2004: 213, n. 8, exaggerates the resemblance somewhat). Tostig's presence in Flanders is well-documented, though the only Scandinavian source to record it is *Hkr*. Orderic is the only non-Scandinavian source to say he went to Normandy; *Msk*: 264 (*MskAG*: 263) reports briefly a rumour that conflicts with its more lengthy narrative about Tostig's movements (excerpted in the appendix to this chapter), which has Tostig going to Normandy while his ambassador travels to Norway to meet Haraldr Sigurðarson: "en Tosti [for] svþr vm sia til Vallanz at hitta maga sina" ("and Tostig travelled south across the sea to Normandy to meet with his relatives"; on the embassy to Norway, see the next note). The English sources say that Tostig went to Scotland (cf. Chibnall, ed. and trans. 1969–80, ii: 142, n. 3; Gade 2004: 214, and *passim*, on the various sources for Tostig's actions during the course of the year; on which cf. also Freeman 1875: 720–5).

⁴² *Msk*: 264 (*MskAG*: 263): "Oc þat segia sumir menn at Tosti iarl sendi Gothorm Gvnnhildarson til fvndar við Haralld konvng at biþa honom Norþimbraland med svar-dogom. oc eggia hann vestrarar. oc for þa Gvthormr til Noregs" ("And some men say that earl Tostig sent Guthormr Gunnhildarson to meet with King Haraldr [Sigurðarson] to offer him Northumbria with sworn oaths, and urge him to campaign in the west. And so Guthormr went to Norway").

between Tostig and Haraldr before the latter's arrival in Northumbria, with MS C of the ASC and John stating that Tostig and Haraldr met in September in Northumbria by prior agreement,⁴³ and MSS D and E of the ASC stating that Tostig met Haraldr in Scotland and came to Northumbria with him.⁴⁴ The embassy mentioned in *Msk* manages to account for this, while still according with the chronology of Tostig's movements in the ASC and John. Gade concludes plausibly that perhaps *Msk* did indeed have independent access to some information concerning these events, which might have been reliable—at least in this case.⁴⁵

⁴³ ASC MS C: "ȝ he for ða to Scotlande [...] þa ða scipu ham coman, þa com Harold cyn- ing of Norwegian norð into Tinan on unwaran mid swyðe miclum sciphre ȝ na lytlan þat mihte beon mid ðreom hund scypum oððe ma. ȝ Tostig eorl him com to mid eallum þam he begiten hæfde, eall swa hy ær gesprecen hæfdon" (O'Brien O'Keefe, ed. 2000: s.a. 1066: "and then he [sc. Tostig] travelled to Scotland [...] When the ships had returned, Harold, king of Norway, unexpectedly came north to the Tyne with a huge fleet and there were not less than three hundred ships or more. And earl Tostig came to him with all that he had acquired, just as they had earlier discussed"); John of Worcester: "cum classica manu perualida, scilicet plus .d. magnis nauibus, Haroldus Haruagra rex Norreganorum, frater sanctis regis Olai, in ostio Tine fluminis improuise applicuit. Ad quem comes Tostius, ut prius condixerant, sua cum classe uenit, et citato cursu ostium Humbre fluminis intrauerunt" (Darlington, McGurk and Bray, eds and trans. 1998: 602: "Harold Fair-Hair, king of the Norwegians, brother of the blessed King Óláfr, suddenly landed at the mouth of the river Tyne with an overwhelming fleet, namely more than five hundred great ships. Count Tostig came to him with his fleet, as they had earlier agreed, and in a rapid advance they entered the mouth of the river Humber").

⁴⁴ ASC MS D: "ȝ þa wile com Tostig eorl into Humbran [...] ȝ he for to Scotlande mid .xii. snaccum, ȝ hine gemette þær Harold cyng of Norwegan mid þreom hund scypum, ȝ Tostig him to beah ond his man wearð, ȝ hi foron þa begen into Humbran" (Cubbin, ed. 1996: s.a. 1066: "and in the meantime Earl Tostig came up the Humber [...] and he went to Scotland with twelve warships, and Harold, king of Norway, met him there with three hundred ships, and Tostig bowed before him and became his man, and they both went to the Humber"); this is followed almost exactly by MS E (Irvine, ed. 2002: s.a. 1066), omitting, however, that Tostig "wearð" Haraldr's "man".

⁴⁵ For a rather more speculative suggestion that *Msk* contains historical information not corroborated by any other sources, cf. Gade (2000a): examining the narrative about the Norman knight Giffarðr in *Msk* (*Msk*: 323–6; *MskAG*: 303–5), which tells of how Giffarðr approached Magnús berføettr c.1100–1 and offers his services, and is not recorded in any other source, Gade argues that this could very well relate to Henry I's effort to defeat his elder brother Robert and retain the English crown. Giffarðr, in her view, might have been sent to Magnús to petition for his aid, and this might help to explain Magnús's expedition to England in 1102 (cf. Orderic Vitalis: Chibnall, ed. and trans. 1968–80, vi: 48–51); the money left by Magnús in the keeping of a rich citizen of Lincoln that year, and later seized by Henry—a sum of 20,000 pounds according to Orderic Vitalis—was a payment for his assistance (Chibnall, ed. and trans. 1968–80, vi: 48–51: "Quidam locuples Lincolniæ ciuis thesaurum Magni seruabat [...] Qui mortem regis comperiens ad domum suam festinauit, et de regali thesauro negociatus diuitiis admodum exuberauit. Anglorum autem rex [...] a Lincolniensi ciue prædicti principis ærarium exquisiuit [...] et plus quam uiginti milia ut fertur libras argenti abstulit"; "A certain rich citizen of Lincoln kept the treasure of

Similarly, there is at least one instance where *Msk* (followed by *Hkr*) develops something found in Norman sources in a manner not contained in any Norman history: William the Bastard's wife Mathilda, approaching her husband before he departs across the channel, is brutally kicked by him in the Norse accounts.⁴⁶ There are extant stories of William physically abusing his wife in Norman sources too, but these state that the abuse occurred either before his marriage, or in his old age, after his concubine had been hamstrung by the queen.⁴⁷ There was also a story regarding

Magnús [...] hearing of the king's death, he hastened to his home, and having done business with the royal treasure was overflowing in wealth. But the English king demanded the treasure of the [Norwegian] king from the aforementioned citizen of Lincoln [...] and it is said that he took away more than twenty thousand pounds of silver"). The inclusion of this narrative in *Msk* attests further to the *Msk*-author's interest in and knowledge (even if unreliable) of Anglo-Norman history. On the general historical background of Anglo-Norman history in this period, cf. Carpenter (2003: 125–61, esp. 134–8 on Henry and Robert), and in more detail, Green (2006: 42–77; on Magnús, 69; 227).

⁴⁶ *Msk*: 285 (*MskAG*: 277): "Oc þat segia menn aþr Vilhialmr rípi heiman. at cona hans gecc hia hesti hans. oc baþ hann eigi beriaz við Haralld konvng Gopínason. Vilhialmr svarapi styggliga. oc let at henne gengi ecki gopir lvtir til þesar bônar. oc keyrir hestinn með sporanom. oc kœmr sporinn i hofvð henne oc hefir hon bana. oc ræddo menn ogorliga vm þenna atburð. Vilhialmr svarapi. Vist et atburðr ogorligr. en vera kann at eptir macligleicom se. oc hafi hon svecit mic" ("And people say that before William rode from home his wife went up beside his horse and asked him not to do battle with King Harold Godwinsson. William answered harshly and said that she had no good motives for asking this; and he struck his horse with his spurs, and one spur hit her head and caused her death. And men said what happened was terrible; William answered: 'certainly what happened was terrible, but it could be what is most fitting: she betrayed me'"); *Hkr* III: 193 (*HkrH*: 658): "Þann dag, er hann reið ór borginni til skipa sinna ok hann var kominn á hest sinn, þá gekk kona hans til hans ok vildi tala við hann. En er hann sá þat, þá laust hann til hennar með hælunum ok setti sporann fyrir brjóst henni, svá at á kafi stóð. Fell hon ok fekk þegar bana, en jarl reið til skips" ("That day, when he rode out of the castle to his ships and he had come to his horse, his wife went to him and wanted to speak with him. But when he saw that, he struck at her with his heels and hit her with his spur so that it sank deep into her breast. She fell and died at once; but the earl rode to the ship").

⁴⁷ William abusing Mathilda before his marriage: *Chronicon Turonense* (Bouquet, ed. 1869–1904, xi: 348): "Guillelmus Dux clam apud Brugis ubi puella morabatur, cum paucis accelerat, eamque regredientem ab Ecclesia pugnīs, calcibus et calcaribus verberat et castigat [...] Quo facto, puella dolens ad lectum decubat; ad quam pater veniens, illam de sponso recipiendo interrogat et requirit: quæ respondens dixit, se numquam habere maritum, nisi Guillelmum Ducem Normanniæ" ("With a few men, Duke William secretly hurried to Bruges, where the girl resided, and struck and beat her with blows, slaps and spurs as she was returning from the church [...] After this, the girl took to her bed in pain, and when her father came to her asking and demanding of her that she take a spouse, she responded saying that she would not have any other husband except for William the Duke of Normandy"). William abusing Mathilda after she hamstringed his concubine: William of Malmesbury (Mynors, Thomson and Winterbottom, eds and trans. 1998: 500–3): "non desint qui ganniant eum celibatui antiquo renuntiassse cum regia potestas accrevisset, uolutatum cum cuiusdam presbiteri filia, quam per satellitem succiso poplite Mathildis sustulerit; quapropter illum exheredatum, illam ad mortem freno equi cesam" ("those are

Harold Godwinsson kicking his mother before his last battle, occurring once more not in an Anglo-Saxon, but rather in a Norman source, namely Orderic Vitalis's contribution to the *Gesta Normannorum ducum*.⁴⁸ *Msk* and *Hkr* provide an account that must be based on a Norman tradition, but is not contained, in the form they give it, in any other history; this story, moreover, has no relevance at all to the main narrative of either text, and is most unlikely to have been derived from a native Scandinavian source.⁴⁹

not lacking who gossip that he renounced his earlier chastity when his royal power grew, and wallowed with the daughter of a certain priest, whom Mathilda sent away after having her hamstrung by a vassal. On account of this [they say], the vassal was disinherited, and Mathilda was flogged to death with a horse's bridle").

⁴⁸ "matremque suam, que nimis ipsum retinere secum satagebat, pede procaciter percussit" (Van Houts, ed. and trans. 1992–5, ii: 168–9; "and he kicked his mother insolently, when she did her best to hold him back with her"). For other sources with similar narratives (concerning both William and Harold), cf. Freeman (1875: 661–3); Thomson and Winterbottom (1999: 252).

⁴⁹ Another embellishment of *Hkr*'s similarly not contained in a Norman source displays "minute knowledge" that Freeman finds "startling" (1875: 227): *Hkr* relates how Harold chats with Mathilda late into the night, and William's displeasure at this is appeased by Harold asking for the hand of his daughter: "Jarl [sc. William] gekk optast snimma at sofa, en Haraldr sat lengi á kveldum ok talaði við konu jarls. Fór svá fram lengi um vetrinn. Eitt sinn, er þau töludu, sagði hon: 'Nú hefir jarl rætt um við mik spurt, hvat vit talaðim svá þrátt, ok er hann nú reiðr.' Haraldr svarar: 'Vit skulum hann nú láta vita sem skjótast allar reður okkrar.' Eptir um daginn kallaði Haraldr jarl til tals við sik, ok gengu þeir í málstofu. Þar var ok kona jarls ok ráðuneyti þeira. Þá tók Haraldr til máls: 'Þat er at segja yðr, jarl, at fleira býr í hingatkvámu minni en þat, er ek hefi enn upp borit fyrir yðr. Ek ætla at biðja dóttur þinnar til eiginkonu mér. Hefi ek þetta rætt fyrir móður hennar optliga, ok hefir hon mér því heitit at liðsinna þetta mál við yðr.'" (*Hkr* III: 169–70; *HkrH*: 641–2: "The earl went to bed early very often, and Harold sat and chatted late into the evening with the wife of the earl. The carried on this way for a long time through the winter. One time, when they were chatting, she said: 'Now the earl has heard that people are talking about me, [about] what we chat about so frequently, and he is now wrathful.' Harold answered: 'We should inform him as soon as possible about everything we have talked about.' The next day, Harold called the earl to talk with him, and they went to the meeting-hall. The earl's wife was also there, and their counsellors. Then Harold spoke: 'I must tell you, Earl, that there is more to my journey here than what I have revealed to you so far. I intend to ask for your daughter as my wife. I have spoken of this many times with her mother, and she has told me to take this matter further with you.'"). Freeman (1875: 700–3) lists numerous accounts in Norman sources that know of the betrothal, and like *Hkr* give the breaking of the engagement as one of William's reasons for going against Harold (cf. *Hkr* III: 193; *HkrH*: 658: "Þat var ok með, at hann þóttisk eiga at gjalda Haraldi svírðing, er hann hafði slitit festmálum við dóttur hans"; "And a further consideration was that it seemed to him that he had to avenge the disgrace that caused by Harold, when he had broken the engagement with his daughter"); but no other source provides the intimate details given by *Hkr*. *Msk*: 285 (*MskAG*: 277) gives a condensed version that suggests a relationship between Mathilda and Haraldr, without the detail of *Hkr*; although it does mention the betrothal, the breaking of the engagement is not here given as a reason for William's invasion of England: "Oc melto menn at hann legði hvg a cono Vilhialms. oc veri þeira ast mikil. oc grvnar nv iarll af vmreyþvm manna. toco þat rap at Haralldr festi ser dottor hans. oc ferþi sic sva vndan

Such confluences reinforce the view that Scandinavian historians had a particular interest in Anglo-Norman history and the events surrounding 1066, and had access to stories unknown or little known to Norman and English historians; it would seem that there was mutual interaction of tales between the Normans (on the continent and in England) and Scandinavia, and that historians in both regions were interested in histories of each other—to the extent that they could provide narratives of the other, dependent on, but not contained in, any native tradition of the other peoples.

In addition to these correspondences of content between Norman and Norse historiography, we should also note that like the Scandinavian works, some of the Norman histories make use of verse. Frederic Amory has argued, based on his understanding of ‘saga style’, that the prosimetrum of Dudo of St Quentin, like that of Saxo, was ultimately derived from a native Scandinavian tradition, and while Saxo presents a true confluence of native and Latin traditions, Dudo does not manage this quite as effectively.⁵⁰ His analysis is, however, not very compelling, not least because of an insufficiently clear enunciation of what differentiates a native prosimetrical ‘saga style’ from a style that could be influenced by non-native sources;⁵¹ nevertheless, further comparative stylistic studies, using rigorous philological criteria to determine what constitutes ‘saga style’, would certainly be useful in assessing the direction and character of links between Norse and Norman traditions. Other scholars, most notably Elisabeth Van Houts, have also argued that some aspects of Norman historiography—particularly information about Scandinavia—are derived from Scandinavian traditions, but it is not really possible to prove this, and the borrowing might be in the other direction (as argued by Gade and White, for instance, albeit with regard to different material): just as traditions about the Trojan origins of Scandinavians was ultimately derived from foreign sources, so too could information about Scandinavian history

þvi ameli er Vilhialmr iarl hafði hann firir” (“and men said that he had his mind set on William’s wife, and that there was a great love between them, and the earl [sc. William] was angry about the gossiping of men. They decided that Harold should be betrothed to his daughter, and thus he avoided the reproach of Earl William”). As Magnús Fjalldal has pointed out (2005: 57), *Hkr*’s story mirrors that given in *Ynglinga saga* about the king Álfir, his queen Bera, and his brother Yngvi (*Hkr* I: 40–1; *HkrH*: 23–4); it might therefore not be derived from Norman tradition—or *Ynglinga saga* might have been influenced by Norman narratives about William, Mathilda and Harold.

⁵⁰ Amory (1978); see also similarly Amory (1979).

⁵¹ Cf. the severe but compelling critique of Scandinavianist readings of Dudo in Christiansen (trans. 1998: xvi–xviii).

and customs in thirteenth-century Scandinavian texts originate in earlier Norman works.⁵² I would suggest the further possibility that some stories regarding exploits in the east might derive from a common stock of narratives, themselves drawing perhaps on Greek and Arabic sources. Dudo, at any rate, clearly absorbed Latin traditions, regardless of the extent to which Scandinavian prosimetrum might have influenced his work, and the ways in which he shapes his prosimetrum appear to be closer to Latin than to Scandinavian traditions.⁵³

Another potential connection with a foreign, this time insular, source, the narration of Óláfr Tryggvason's survival after his last battle, presents a somewhat more complex problem.⁵⁴ All the synoptics, Oddr Snorrason, Gunnlaugr Leifsson, and *Fsk* and *Hkr*, report rumours that Óláfr survived his last battle, and the compendia and Oddr seem to base their information on two verses of Hallfrøðr vanðræðaskáld's *Erfidrápa*; Hallfrøðr is known in later traditions as one of Óláfr's skalds, and is thus contemporary.⁵⁵ A narrative about Harold Godwinsson surviving his last battle

⁵² Van Houts (1983); Gade (1997); White (2005). Van Houts' conclusions are especially dubious with regard to reports of rituals and customs, many of which appear to be ethnographic commonplaces rather than reliable accounts of pre-Christian religion. Amory (1979) has argued that these early Norman works rely on Dudo of St Quentin, who himself would have been influenced by earlier Norse sources. Another account of a roundabout route for some details regarding Scandinavian kings in Orderic Vitalis's *Ecclesiastical History* is given by Marritt (2006), who suggests that Orderic may have got his information during his stay at Crowland abbey sometime between 1114 and 1124; Crowland was where earl Valbjófr (OE Waltheof), an Englishman with Scandinavian connections who was apparently the patron of a skald, was buried (on Valbjófr, see below at nn. 61–6). Marritt suggests further that Sigurðr Jórsalafari, the last Norwegian king discussed in any detail in Orderic's *Historia Ecclesiastica*, might have taken a route to the Holy Land via England, specifically Lincolnshire, and stopped at Crowland. This is completely speculative, but certainly presents a possible alternative route for transmission of Scandinavian material to insular/Norman historians. Marritt is, however, probably wrong in suggesting that connections between Normandy and Scandinavia tapered off by the twelfth century; the links examined above between Norman and Scandinavian traditions seem to be too strong for this part of his argument to be feasible.

⁵³ Friis-Jensen (1995); Pabst (1995); see also Mortensen (1995) on Dudo in a comparative perspective. We should note that Saxo uses verse exclusively as direct speech of the characters involved (not exactly in keeping with Latin tradition), whereas Dudo uses poems largely as personal apostrophes (but generally not as authentication) (Friis-Jensen 1995: 20); the vernacular Scandinavian histories appear to be familiar with both forms (and others) of the use of verse with prose. Nevertheless, clearly there is more work to be done regarding the relationships between Dudo (and Saxo) and later Norse material.

⁵⁴ On the following, cf. Kopár (1997); White (2005: 75–8).

⁵⁵ For an illuminating recent reading of this poem (excluding the prose context), see Goeres (2010: 125–41).

is extant from a *Vita Haroldi* (in a manuscript of c.1205–c.1215),⁵⁶ and it is likely, since a similar narrative is given about Harold in one manuscript of Oddr Snorrason's saga, that Oddr (or his translator or redactor) knew this text. All the Norwegian histories (Latin and vernacular) also report some version of the story about Óláfr, mostly in a rather noncommittal fashion, though the *HN* is, uniquely, explicitly sceptical about the veracity of this rumour (note that Oddr, however, explicitly states that he believes Óláfr did survive.⁵⁷ Because of many similarities in the narratives about Óláfr and Harold presented in Oddr's saga, White suggests that Oddr modelled his account on the Latin *Vita Haroldi*.⁵⁸ While this may be the case specifically for the prose narrative as presented by Oddr, it is less clear whether the tradition of Óláfr's survival itself was dependent on insular sources of any kind. The matter is complicated by the fact that while Oddr knows the legend about Harold Godwinsson, he also cites Hallfrøðr's verses on Óláfr Tryggvason's possible survival. Does this mean that the narrative about the Norwegian king grew up independently of that on Harold Godwinsson? If the traditions about Hallfrøðr's date are correct, he could not have drawn on a narrative about Harold Godwinsson for his verses about Óláfr's life after the battle, as Harold died much later than Óláfr; it is, however, possible that the received verses have been influenced by intervening tradition concerning the English king. In other words, even if we do accept that Hallfrøðr was contemporary to the events he reports, we need to consider the extent to which even skaldic verse might be influenced, in composition or transmission, by non-native sources: does Hallfrøðr's poem in the extant recensions, written only from the late twelfth-century onwards, rely ultimately on insular traditions (whether written or oral) about Harold?⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Birch (ed. 1885).

⁵⁷ Ólafur Halldórsson (ed. 2006b: 358–9); Andersson (trans. 2003, 137). The relevant texts are cited in the Appendix to this chapter, texts F1–F8.

⁵⁸ White (2005: 77).

⁵⁹ According to *Msk*, *Fsk* and *Hkr*, two English noblemen, Skúli, the son of Tostig Godwinsson, and Ketill krókr, his brother, moved to Norway in the aftermath of Stamford Bridge and/or Hastings; while *Fsk* and *Hkr* follow *Msk* almost exactly their accounts of these events, *Msk* places the withdrawal of Óláfr Haraldsson and the Anglo-Saxon nobles before its account of Harold Godwinsson's death, whereas in the later compendia we are told of Skúli's journey to Norway after the death of Harold Godwinsson. Skúli and Ketill both received prominent positions in Norway; Skúli's great-grandsons were King Ingi Bárðarson and Jarl Skúli Bárðarson; the latter was a patron of Snorri Sturluson. It is quite possible that other Anglo-Saxons also moved to Norway, either as supporters of Tostig's side in the battle against Harold Godwinsson, or in order to escape the new regime of William. Memorial traditions of Anglo-Saxon nobles may have been mediated through these persons, along with traditions regarding Harold that may have been transferred to

Or does it go back to a genuinely contemporary Norwegian oral tradition, a poem composed by Hallfrøðr before Harold's death? And if the latter is the case, given that Harold lived and died later than Óláfr and the *Vita Haroldi* exists only in a late manuscript, we may even ask whether the transference could not have been in the other direction: perhaps Hallfrøðr's verse gives evidence of a near-contemporary Scandinavian legend concerning a Scandinavian king, which then became transferred to the Anglo-Saxon king.

My purpose here is not to try and trace influence in any particular direction; it is not very easy to determine whence and whither the stream of tradition flows in the instance cited above. But given the indisputable links between Normandy, England and Norway (the northern/Norwegian origins of the Normans, clearly still remembered in Normandy a generation before 1066 in Dudo's work; the many vikings and Scandinavian monks supposed to have spent time in Normandy; the common experience of battle in the near east; the centuries-long involvement of Norwegians and other Scandinavians in English affairs), and the shared traditions that seem to be behind some of the stories cropping up in both Norse and Norman sources, a fruitful avenue for further study might be examining the nature of the connections between continental and insular (particularly Norman) and Norwegian historiography. Heather O'Donoghue has shown how the function of verse (if not the amount, form or language) is often similar in the works of William of Malmesbury, Orderic Vitalis, and

others in the later Norse accounts. Cf. *Msk*: 283–4 (*MskAG*: 276): “Þa qvomo þeir í Noreg með Ólafi konvngi Sculi sonr Tosta iarls Gopinasonar oc Ketill crocr norþan af Halogalandi, fecc Olafr konungr honvm þar qvanfang gott. oc gaf honom lendz mannz rett norþr þar. oc er fra Catli comit mart stormenni. En Sculi var vitr maþr oc scaurvngr mikill manna friþastr sionom. oc sniallr i mali. hann gerþiz forstiori i hirþ konvngs oc talaþi a þingom. oc reþ ollom landraþom með konvngi. hann var kallaþr konvngsfostri [...] Sonr Scula konvngsfostra var Asolfr faðir Gothorms a Reini faðir Barðar faðir Inga konvngs oc Scula jarls” (“Then Skúli, the son of Tostig Godwinsson, and Ketill krókr, came to Norway with King Óláfr from Halogaland. Óláfr made Ketill a good match in marriage and gave him the rights of a chieftain in the north, and many a great man is descended from Ketill. Skúli was a wise and outstanding man, and the most handsome of men, and eloquent in speech. He made himself the leader in the king's retinue and spoke at the þings and counselled the king on the governance of the land. He was called the king's foster-father [...] Skúli the king's foster-father's son was Ásólfr, father of Guthormr of Rein, father of Bárðr, father of King Ingi and Jarl Skúli”). *Fsk*: 296 (*FskF*: 237) and *Hkr* III: 197–8 (*HkrH*: 660) provide essentially identical accounts: *Fsk* omits Ketill and names Skúli's lands as being in Vík, Hqrðaland and Þrándheimr; *Hkr* adds that Ketill was Skúli's brother, that both were very dear to the king (“Váru þeir báðir inir kærstu Óláfi konungi”); both tell us that Skúli was given Guðrún, a relative of Óláfr, in marriage. On Snorri's relationship to Jarl Skúli, cf. Wanner (2008: *passim*).

the kings' sagas (including *Ágrip* and *HARN*, even though the latter only cites non-native verse about non-native events): the Norman historians, like their Scandinavian counterparts, often use verse as a means of moral rather than factual corroboration, and as an aesthetic effect; in addition, William especially takes some care to identify his sources, as do the Norse works.⁶⁰ Perhaps deeper examination might reveal further how we should place both traditions in relationship to each other, and within a broader context of medieval historiography at the end of the twelfth century. As a first step, though, we should perhaps acknowledge a good deal of mutual interaction and influence; while written Norman works quite probably had some impact on Scandinavian traditions, oral transmission cannot be ruled out, and nor can influence in the opposite direction.

One reason for mutual interest might have been the knowledge, apparent in both Norman and Scandinavian sources, that the Normans were originally North-men, from Scandinavia. This brings us to another example of interest in former Scandinavians abroad, the story of earl Valþjófr (Waltheof), which is, strictly speaking, as irrelevant to the history of Haraldr Sigurðarson as is the background to the battle of Hastings, or William's treatment of Mathilda.⁶¹ *Fsk* is the first to present a fairly extensive narrative about this figure, based in part on a verse of a certain Þórkell, who was a retainer of the earl in England.⁶² According to *Hkr*, these verses are part of a *Valþjófsflokk*, of which nothing else is extant.⁶³ The information presented by *Fsk* and *Hkr* is not quite the same as that in any other sources, including the *Vita Waldevi*.⁶⁴ However, we should note that according to his *Vita*, Valþjófr was of Danish descent;⁶⁵ we should also note that the *Vita* contains both verse and prose. Valþjófr was not, of

⁶⁰ O'Donoghue (2005: 20–3; 29; 34–9); cf. Andersson and Gade (2000: 41). O'Donoghue also points out that even if a native oral prosimetrum existed, it obviously influenced no texts before *Ágrip* (2005: 17–18); given that *Ágrip* draws heavily on Theodoricus, it does not seem unreasonable to follow her proposition that the author might have been influenced—like Theodoricus—by non-native prosimetra.

⁶¹ Valþjófr was one of Harold Godwinsson's earls who is said to have been responsible for a rebellion against William c.1080. On Valþjófr's life, in addition to Freeman (1876: 266–8; 571–601), see Bolton (2007); Scott (1952); and on the Norse material: Magnús Fjalldal (2005, 64–6); Scott (1953–7).

⁶² *Fsk*: 293–5, v. 248 (*FskF*: 234–5); similarly *Hkr* III: 194–7, vv. 161–2 (*HkrH*: 658–9).

⁶³ Cf. also *Hemings þáttur* (Fellows Jensen, ed. 1962: 46; 55–6), which provides the most extensive narrative about Valþjófr in relation to the events of 1066, but does not include the verse, or much of his biography.

⁶⁴ Giles (ed. 1854); Finlay (2004: 25–7).

⁶⁵ Cf. the *Vita* (Giles, ed. 1854: 5) on Valþjófr's grandfather Beorn: "Hic Beorn Dacus fuit natione"; Beorn's son, Siward, ends up reaching England, where Valþjófr is born.

course, Norman, but he was a North-man by descent; it is perhaps not too far-fetched to suggest a Scandinavian interest in the deeds of North-men abroad, especially given that many of the kings who are the foci of the narratives themselves spent much of their life in foreign lands, as vikings or Varangians or crusaders.⁶⁶

We may note here also that the Anglo-Saxons continued to commemorate their origins on the continent, which might be why they cultivated some stories regarding those lands;⁶⁷ perhaps the Norman interest in Scandinavian traditions is motivated by a similar impulse, and comparison of Norman and Anglo-Saxon treatments of the respective 'homelands'—both ultimately somewhere in Scandinavia—might yield results fruitful even for the understanding of Scandinavian historiography. As to the causes for Icelandic interest in Norman history, Elizabeth Ashman Rowe has argued that in *Hkr* at least, the Normans are seen as somewhat akin to the Icelanders in that they set up their duchy after fleeing harsh Norwegian kingship;⁶⁸ while her suggestions regarding the consequences of this in terms of *Hkr*'s use of Norman historiography for current political purposes (Norman rule of England is divinely sanctioned, but Norwegian—Haraldr's—rule is not, and therefore in the thirteenth century too, Iceland, like Normandy a polity formed by refugees from Norway, cannot legitimately be ruled by a Norwegian king) are in need of further refinement, her paper is an example of one of the ways in which the Norman-Icelandic cross-currents might usefully be examined.

⁶⁶ See also Rauer (2000: 125–33), on the Scandinavian links of Valþjófr and his *Vita*. Marritt (2006) speculates that Valþjófr's Scandinavian connections may have provided a route for Scandinavian material to get to England and ultimately Orderic Vitalis. As we have seen (cf. n. 59 above), memorial traditions about Anglo-Saxon aristocrats may have been mediated through those of them who moved to Norway after 1066; for the most part, however, the Scandinavian works are aligned to the Norman texts rather than Anglo-Saxon traditions, and for this reason the story of Valþjófr is especially interesting. Bolton (2007) has recently revived the possibility that Valþjófr was related to the Danish royal family (Danish royal traditions and the origin narrative of Valþjófr have some points in common), and provides a very interesting examination of the origin myths leading back to a bear-ancestor, occurring both in the narratives of Valþjófr and other Scandinavian material; while his arguments regarding the relationships between the various narratives are necessarily speculative, they nevertheless further underline the extent of connections along the North Sea in the eleventh century.

⁶⁷ Frank (1991); Ghosh (2009, 174–5; 199–203).

⁶⁸ Rowe (1994: 158–60).

The Broader Context of the Growth of Historical Writing in Iceland

We have seen that there was a complex of post-Conquest interactions between narratives in England, Normandy and Scandinavia: similar stories, but often told somewhat differently, and in some cases providing information (whether correct or not) not contained in the same form elsewhere, crop up in Norman and Scandinavian sources.⁶⁹ White's conclusion that the kings' sagas are influenced substantially by the Norman 'Gesta regum', taken along with the varied evidence of contact between Scandinavia and elsewhere in Europe, raises a number of fascinating and crucial questions. Given that the (Norwegian) authors of the Latin synoptics had access to some sort of native sources, but apparently also used plenty of non-native material, and given that at least Theodoricus seems to have written for a Norwegian audience,⁷⁰ why did the Icelandic writers choose the vernacular—especially if influenced not by vernacular works, but by Latin histories?⁷¹ If a writer such as the author of *Hkr*—who explicitly stresses the reliability of his sources, and the provenance of his information: skaldic verse, oral informants, genealogies (*langfēðgatal*), and Ari⁷²—uses a Notker-inspired account of Oddr to embellish his story of

⁶⁹ A further possible instance of such three-way interaction is the *Encomium Emmae Reginae* (Campbell and Keynes, eds 1998), a panegyric on the daughter of a Norman count, who was married first to an Anglo-Saxon king [Æthelred] and then to Knútr [Canute/Cnut], the king of Denmark and England. For a thorough introduction, see Keynes (1998); Andy Orchard (2001), argues that the text draws on Danish, Norman and Anglo-Saxon traditions (possibly including skaldic verse). In the context of Scandinavian–Anglo-Saxon cultural contacts with particular emphasis on skaldic verse, see also the papers of Townend (2000; 2001; 2002a; 2003; 2005), which focus on the period from the late tenth to the late mid-eleventh century.

⁷⁰ Foote (1998); Mortensen (2000b: 151).

⁷¹ Perhaps the example of Alfredian England is suggestive: the use of the vernacular guaranteed a greater dissemination of (the content of) texts among the people, including those who could not read but could be read to. A crucial difference, though, is that there was no king in Iceland who promoted himself and his kingdom through the production of historiography, as was the case in Alfredian England. On historiography, the vernacular and the written word in Alfredian England, cf. Keynes (2003); Scharer (1996); Wormald (1991); on the possible influence of England in the shaping of the Norwegian kingdom in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (including the use of the vernacular, even for laws and charters), see e.g. Sawyer (2006); more generally on Anglo-Saxon influence, cf. the works cited below at n. 153.

⁷² *Hkr* I: 3–7; *Hkr* II: 419–22 (the passages are cited and discussed above at chapter one, n. 16, and chapter two, at nn. 77–92). *Hkr*'s praise of Ari here does not explicitly state that Ari is one of the author's sources.

Óláfr Tryggvason,⁷³ given that he might himself have had access to Notker and other foreign sources, what does this say about his approach to truth and history? What are we to make of the apparently increasing influence of insular and Norman sources, in a period when Scandinavian political and economic influence in England had actually reduced considerably from the ‘viking age’? Is there any relationship at all between the work of Saxo Grammaticus—a writer who manifestly knew a wide range of non-native works of various genres—and the later Norwegian and Icelandic histories? Given the close links between the sees of Lund (with which Saxo was associated) and Niðaróss—especially in the period immediately before the writing of the compendia, during the exile of the archbishop of the latter city in Lund⁷⁴—perhaps turning to Saxo, both to examine what sources were available to him, and more importantly, how he treats his acknowledged and unacknowledged sources, might be a useful way of helping us understand the Norse compendia (which share with Saxo, but not with most earlier Latin histories, both the prosimetrical form and the extensive use of explicitly native verse as a historical source).⁷⁵ Saxo has largely been ignored as a model for the saga authors by scholars of Norse prosimetrum, primarily because he is so manifestly dependent on classical models; but perhaps comparative work might establish the extent to which the vernacular authors used verse and prose in ways that were similar, thus leading us further in understanding the origins, and more importantly the function, of prosimetrum in the kings’ sagas. Note also that Dudo of St Quentin—who may have had some sort of connection, even if we cannot be sure in which direction, with Scandinavian traditions—was

⁷³ This is argued by Lönnroth (1975a); but cf. Andersson (2006, 41), who points out that much of the style of the passage referred to—the battle at Svöldr—cannot be derived from Notker, and suggests that it is probably derived from native oral traditions. The passages in question are in Oddr’s saga (Ólafur Halldórsson, ed. 2006b: 312–19; Andersson, trans. 2003: 118–20), and *Hkr* I: 353–6 (*HkrH*: 231–3); the Notker passage comes at the end of his history of Charlemagne, in the context of the latter’s attack on the Lombard king Desiderius (Haeferle, ed. 1962: 82–4).

⁷⁴ Mortensen (2000b; 2003); on Eysteinn’s exile in Lund, cf. also Ólafía Einarsdóttir (2000).

⁷⁵ On prosimetrum and non-native influences in Saxo, see Friis-Jensen (1987; 1988; 1992; 1993; 1995), Mortensen (1987), and Pabst (1994: 924–8); see also the essays collected in Friis-Jensen (ed. 1981), of which, for a nativist perspective, cf. Bjarni Guðnasson (1981) and Martínez Pizarro (1981). On Saxo’s sources more generally, cf. Riis (2006: 41–93), who stresses the written sources and models. Foerster (2009: 115–50) is a recent analysis of Saxo’s methods of interpreting history, which Foerster sees as being wholly within a larger European tradition.

apparently known to Saxo;⁷⁶ this provides yet another instance of Norman and Scandinavian contacts that might have implications for vernacular histories as well as Latin works. Saxo and Dudo would, I suggest, be useful comparanda with regard also to the question of the function of historiography in general, and with regard to placing the sense of historical consciousness expressed in the kings' sagas within a broader context.⁷⁷

Perhaps the most crucial questions arising from the foregoing are: what is the relationship between native and non-native sources, their function, and the perception of their relative appropriateness and reliability, in the eyes of Scandinavian historians; and does this change over time? It is perhaps also worth asking, if writers knew that they were transferring stories across contexts, whether this had any effect on how they understood their works to be representing 'their' histories. Of course, the use of 'foreign' stories to embellish 'national' histories was common enough in the Latin historical sources,⁷⁸ but such narratives were not necessarily used solely to tell a better story; the function of borrowings in Norwegian historiography, as compared to their role in other historical traditions (especially those from which influence on Scandinavian works can be shown) would be worth further examination. Perhaps it is also not insignificant that Icelanders writing about Norwegian history might have been especially given to embellishing their works with foreign sources: could this be precisely because Norway was also, to some extent at least, foreign, and the past was not one the authors identified with entirely? As a corollary to this

⁷⁶ Friis-Jensen and Zeeberg (ed. and trans. 2005: I.i.1); cf. Ellis Davidson and Fisher (trans. 1979–80: 16).

⁷⁷ Jørgensen, Friis-Jensen and Mundal (eds 2010) came to my attention too late to be discussed properly in the present work, but contains a number of very useful and pioneering comparative studies of Saxo and Snorri, in particular the papers of Friis-Jensen, Johanssen and Mortensen. A view contrary to that expressed above is put forward by Foerster (2009: 151–70; 176): for him, the kings' sagas show a development largely independent of the 'European' traditions within which Saxo belongs.

⁷⁸ Perhaps one of the most spectacular examples is in the earliest extant Latin 'national' history, Jordanes's *De origine actibusque Getarum* (Mommsen, ed. 1882), written in the 550s, and drawing heavily on Roman and Greek ethnographic and historical writings about other peoples; on Jordanes's sources and the function of the distant past in this work, see Ghosh (2009: 21–50). Both Dudo and William of Jumièges draw on Jordanes in their histories of the Normans, and there is a strange irony in the fact that Jordanes—apparently the inventor of the Scandinavian origins of Germanic-speaking peoples—later becomes a source (even if at one remove or more), for concocted histories of a formerly Germanic-speaking people that has in fact recently left Scandinavia. While the use of Jordanes's narratives in later histories is well documented, there has been little study of the possible influence of his methods of appropriation and his shaping of historical consciousness on later writers.

one should ask whether there is much difference between the way texts such as Saxo's *Gesta Danorum*, Theodoricus's *HARN*, and the *HN* on the one hand (all works of authors writing about their own countries), and *Msk* and *Hkr* on the other hand, treat non-Scandinavian sources: does the fact that the material itself is non-native (by which I mean Norwegian and not Icelandic) in the latter two texts make much of a difference?⁷⁹

As we know, some of these questions could also be asked of the postulated foreign sources themselves: to give perhaps the most obvious example, Einhard's depiction of Charlemagne is in many instances heavily reliant on Suetonius, and probably reflects more his effort to portray Charlemagne as a genuine Roman emperor than the 'truth' about him (an example probably even closer to Scandinavia is that of Asser's life of Alfred, itself greatly influenced by Einhard).⁸⁰ This being the case, perhaps questions regarding the functions of non-native sources in the Scandinavian kings' sagas and their pertinence to the notion of historical truth embraced by the authors of these works would be illuminated by a consideration of the foreign histories the Scandinavian writers had access to, and by which they might well have been influenced. Influence here means, therefore, not quotation, but attitudes: attitudes regarding sources and specific categories of sources; regarding the function of prose and verse; and regarding the very nature of historical truth itself. We have seen in the previous chapter that medieval Icelandic concepts of authenticity and truth seem more likely to correspond to those of the continental historians examined by, for example, Goetz and Partner, than to our own;⁸¹ the kind of influences at work here would be well worth further examination, and comparative study could serve greatly to illuminate our knowledge of medieval European ideas about history, truth and fiction, as well as concepts more specific to royal biographies, such as nationhood and kingship.

Ármann Jakobsson has shown that the ways in which kings are characterised in the kings' sagas, ranging from the concepts of good kingship to

⁷⁹ It might also be worth examining whether and how narratives about Iceland, written by Icelanders, treat non-native sources in comparison with the kings' sagas.

⁸⁰ The relevant Einhard passages are chapters 26–9 (Holder-Egger, ed. 1911: 30–4); cf. Suetonius's descriptions of various emperors (Ihm, ed. 1933: *Div. Iul.* 40; 44; 56; *Div. Aug.* 31; 34; *Tib.* 26; *Cal.* 15; *Div. Claud.* 41). On Einhard's use of Suetonius, cf. Haubrichs (1987: 40–2); and more generally on Suetonius's Carolingian-era reception, see Innes (1999). Asser's life is edited in Stevenson (ed. 1959); on Asser and his sources, cf. Lapidge (2003).

⁸¹ Goetz (1992; 1999; 2003; 2006); Partner (1977); see also the other works cited at chapter two, n. 109.

kings' physical appearance, have many similarities to broader European traditions;⁸² while this need not mean influence in any direction (and indeed, notions of the importance of a good king for the prosperity of land and people, for example, are likely to be, at least to some extent, universal, as Ármann himself argues),⁸³ more detailed comparative analysis might illuminate further the common ground as well as the differences between Icelandic and other European traditions. Ármann's work is an important step in showing the broad similarities between Icelandic and other historiography, just as White's monograph lays the groundwork for understanding specific links between Scandinavian and non-Scandinavian works; both are stimulation for further detailed comparative work on sources, methods, and attitudes (see further the discussion of Ármann's works below chapter four, nn. 20–36).

However, such comparative study as I advocate needs to be cautious about what texts are used as comparanda, and what matter is compared: there must be sufficient sensitivity not just to similarities, but also to differences in context and treatment, with due attention given not just to the contexts of the Scandinavian works, but also to the backgrounds to the non-Scandinavian histories with which they are compared. I would suggest that we need to be far more circumspect and clear about the subjects of comparison than is, for example, Sverre Bagge, in one of the very few studies to examine the ideology of the kings' sagas in a comparative perspective.⁸⁴ Bagge juxtaposes *Hkr's* accounts of Óláfr helgi Haraldsson with narratives on Ottonian kings by Thietmar of Merseburg⁸⁵ and Widukind of Corvey (late tenth century),⁸⁶ and suggests that there were many similarities—but although I believe such comparative work is essential, Bagge's points of comparison often seem spurious. For example, it is incorrect that “both traditions belong to a period prior to the introduction of the fully developed ideology of Christian kingship”.⁸⁷ Widukind could look back to a tradition with such an ideology and all the rhetorical devices associated with it that dated at the very least to Charles the Bald (king of western Francia 840–77), and should more plausibly be dated back to the reign of Pippin (king of the Franks, 751–68); Ottonian

⁸² Ármann Jakobsson (1997).

⁸³ Ármann Jakobsson (1997: 246–54).

⁸⁴ Bagge (1997).

⁸⁵ Trillmich (ed. and trans. 1957).

⁸⁶ Hirsch and Lohman (eds 1935).

⁸⁷ Bagge (1997: 425).

historians most certainly did adopt a significant amount of their historiographic and political ideologies from the Carolingians. And we should be cautious even about the the lack of an “ideology of Christian kingship” in Norway too—it is not clear how developed “fully developed” is, and as Stéphane Caviaux, most recently, has shown, it is probable that the political ideology of the reforming papacies from the late eleventh and twelfth centuries were well-known in episcopal circles in Scandinavia.⁸⁸ Nor does Bagge’s characterisation of Widukind’s Otto as a “Germanic chieftain and charismatic warlord, not the Christian *rex iustus*”, and of Thietmar and Widukind as “heirs to Gregory of Tours’s ‘barbarization’ of Roman historiography” do justice to Otto and his court, or Thietmar and Widukind, or even Gregory;⁸⁹ thus the parallel with the kings in *Hkr* (also apparently ‘Germanic’ chieftains, since they lack Christian royal ideology) cannot be made plausible. Furthermore, very little of *Hkr* is concerned with the recent past, and Óláfr died about two centuries before *Hkr* was written; Widukind’s and Thietmar’s histories are overwhelmingly concerned with events of their own time, or with kings of the previous three generations—and I would argue that one needs to be cautious in comparing any contemporary history, based on eyewitness accounts (and written by people who themselves witnessed many of the events they recorded) with stories of the more or less distant past. Finally, Widukind and Thietmar potentially had access to a relatively large fund of (mainly contemporary) written sources about most of the kings of their histories, whether other narratives, or diplomatic material; this is not, as far as we can tell, true of *Hkr* and its author’s sources on Óláfr.⁹⁰ There are, therefore, of course

⁸⁸ Caviaux (2006).

⁸⁹ Bagge (1997: 426).

⁹⁰ Gregory is edited in by Buchner (ed. and trans. 1967); for commentary: Goffart (1988: 112–234); Heinzelmann (1994). In the light of their scholarship, a simplistic view of Gregory’s ‘barbarisation’ can no longer be considered plausible. Bagge, who restates some of his arguments more recently (2009; on Gregory and the sagas: 61), clearly bases his judgement of Gregory on the admittedly inspiring, but now for these purposes rather outdated work of Erich Auerbach (2003; originally published in German in 1946; cf. also Auerbach 1993, originally published in German in 1958). There is a vast literature on Carolingian and Ottonian historiography and ideology establishing precisely the points made in the paragraph above: on the evolution of an “ideology of Christian kingship” under the Carolingians, see e.g. Beumann (1969), Garrison (2000), McKitterick (2004; 2006; 2008), and a number of the essays by Janet Nelson, collected in Nelson (1986; 1996); on the Ottonians (particularly Widukind), the works of Helmut Beumann (1950; 1969; 1970) are fundamental; see in addition Leyser (1979: 75–107), and the more recent works of Körntgen (2001) and Reuter (2006b; 2006c).

many similar divergences between Norman historiographic traditions and those of Scandinavia, which would need to be duly considered in any kind of comparative analysis: like the Ottonians, Norman historians drew on a long political practice of Christian kingship (derived not least from Carolingian Francia), the ideology of which might have been a new import to Scandinavia in the years around 1200 and especially in the reign of Hákon Hákonarson;⁹¹ perhaps it might be fruitful to examine the extent to which this development in political ideology had to do with the reception of Norman historiography, and not just with regard to the reception of romance traditions (on which, see below, chapter four, nn. 28–9; 31).⁹²

As an example of an innovative (though not unproblematic) approach to continental and insular historiography covering roughly the same time period as the kings' sagas, that might bear some fruitful results for Scandinavian works too, one could cite Van Houts's classification of the different kinds of sources used and the diverging levels of credibility accorded to them by the historians.⁹³ Though it appears at first glance

⁹¹ The work of Coviaux (2006), however, suggests that Christian political ideology might have entered Scandinavia rather earlier than is commonly accepted.

⁹² Foerster (2009) is a recent study that looks at both 'southern' and 'northern' historiographic strategies of creating identity by means of differentiation from the 'other'; while he believes that the Latin works from Scandinavia do belong within a broader European tradition, his (somewhat cursory) reading of the vernacular sagas follows very closely the arguments of Bagge (1991; 1997), placing these works in a context that he sees as largely independent of developments elsewhere. As I have suggested in passing above, there is indeed some evidence that even in the vernacular works, notions of 'Wir-Gefühl' might have been defined partly in contrast to an 'other', and it would take a much more detailed study of this matter than Foerster's conclusively to confirm or reject his hypothesis—and Foerster's limiting of 'otherness' to the categories of 'southern' and 'northern' does not quite tell us how well Norse histories correspond in their techniques of differentiation with Latin histories from England or the continent, since in neither case was the 'northern' or 'southern' enemy necessarily the principal 'other' against which a notion of self-identity was defined.

⁹³ Van Houts (1999: 19–39). While Van Houts is often too credulous for my taste, her efforts at a taxonomy of sources present a valuable starting point that could prove very useful. In particular, given that at least Ari explicitly states that he had a female informant, Van Houts's gender-sensitive analysis might also be fruitful for Scandinavian histories. *Ísl* begins thus: "Ísland byggðisk fyrst ýr Norvegi á dögum Haralds ens hárfagra, Hálfðanarsonar ens svarta, í þann tíð—at ætlum ok tólu þeira Teits fóstara míns, þess manns es ek kunna spakastan, sonar Ísleifs biskups, ok Þorkels fǫðurbróður míns Gellissonar, es langt mundi fram, ok Þóriðar Snorradóttur goða, es bæði vas margspök ok óljúgróð" (*Ísl*: 4; Grønlie, trans. 2006: 3: "Iceland was first settled from Norway in the days of Haraldr hárfagi, the son of Hálfðan the Black, in that time—according to the opinion and reckoning of Teitr, the son of bishop Ísleifr and my foster-father, a man I know to be the wisest; and of my uncle Þorkell Gellisson, who remembered a long time back; and of Þóriðr, the daughter of Snorri goði, who was both very wise and exceedingly knowledgeable"). Thus for Ari, the beginning of Icelandic history stems from three informants, one of whom is a woman. In this

that the Norse histories treat all their information as equally reliable, this might not be the case:⁹⁴ we should think, for example, of instances where an author explicitly names eyewitnesses and gives us some indication of how their accounts might have come to him (Halldórr Snorrason and Úlfr Óspaksson; it appears from the instances where *Hkr* names them that the author might do so as a means of authenticating his account);⁹⁵ instances where we are explicitly told the source of information in a poem or in a prose account;⁹⁶ instances where the author appeals to a large number of sources (poems, or the sayings of wise men) but does not cite them;⁹⁷ instances where the verse is not just given as evidence, but explicitly interpreted, sometimes in words not fully in accord with the verse.⁹⁸ Studying the various methods of handling the sources, and how these compare with the ways in which non-native historians the Scandinavian authors might have had access to treated their informants, might prove extremely illuminating. (The ASC, which might also occasionally have been used, is probably another useful comparandum, though its use of verse seems to have been fundamentally different from that of the Norse texts).⁹⁹

connection, see also the story about bishop Þorlákr Þórhallson in the saga about him; he is said to have been taught ancient lore and genealogies by his mother (Ásdís Egilsdóttir, ed. 2002b: 50–1; the text is cited below at n. 146).

⁹⁴ Tatjana Jackson (1984) classifies (rather crudely) a number of ways in which *Hkr* deals with its sources, but provides no analysis of the implications of the author's differing treatment.

⁹⁵ Named at *Hkr* III: 79 (*HkrH*: 583): “Menn íslenzkir eru nefndir, þeir er fóru þar með Haraldi: Halldórr, sonr Snorra goða—hann hafði þessa frásögn hingat til lands—annarr var Úlfr, sonr Óspaks, sonar Ósvífrs ins spaka” (“Men from Iceland are named who travelled with Haraldr: Halldórr, the son of Snorri goði—he brought this story here to this land—and the other was Úlfr, the son of Óspakr Ósvífrsson the Wise”). This passage comes from the middle of *Hkr*'s narrative on Haraldr's Varangian service. Both Halldórr and Úlfr figure prominently in *Msk* and *Hkr*, less so in *Fsk*; *Msk* even provides a *þáttur* on Halldórr (*Msk*: 148–55; *MskAG*: 187–94), who is credited with teaching the sagas of Haraldr to younger storytellers during the summer Alþingi (*Msk*: 199–200; *MskAG*: 222–3; the passage is cited and discussed above, chapter two, n. 164). Whether or not either of these characters actually existed is a moot point, and not really relevant for understanding how *Hkr* establishes the authenticity of its narrative. On *Hkr*'s use of eyewitness testimony, see also the statement regarding the value of eyewitness accounts in the prologue to the *Separate saga*, cited above at chapter two, n. 84.

⁹⁶ Cf. above, chapter two, n. 138, where the poet builds on the words of the king himself.

⁹⁷ e.g. *Hkr* III: 87 (*HkrH*: 588), in which, after citing two poems, the author says: “Í þessum tveim drápum Haralds ok morgum qðrum kvæðum hans er getit” (“In these two *drápur* and many other poems about him it is said”).

⁹⁸ Cf. above, chapter two, at nn. 134–8.

⁹⁹ According to O'Donoghue, the ASC uses verse as independent report, not as source or corroboration, and the information in the verse is not duplicated in the prose (2005: 19).

Argument by analogy is not, obviously, the best or most convincing form of argument; but it may still be valuable in this case because the non-native works are sometimes clearer in their approach, and more significantly, because since their sources are often enough independently extant, their treatment of these sources can be documented. (Equally important is the fact that such questions as those posed here have been asked of insular and continental historiography for much longer, and with far more fruitful results, than is the case with Scandinavian historiography: there is much to learn from research on medieval historians in other parts of Europe.) Thus comparative study might help us understand what the Scandinavian authors intend in cases where they are using sources not otherwise recorded. Most importantly, turning to the broader intellectual horizons would provide a stimulus to asking questions differently than otherwise, perhaps thus leading us to fresh insights about the kings' sagas. Ultimately, it is only by understanding these texts within the larger context of the historical traditions known in Norway and Iceland can we begin truly to understand their place within the intellectual history of medieval Europe: their uniqueness, but perhaps also their conformity.¹⁰⁰ This might lead to a less excitingly divergent, but probably more accurate and fuller understanding of Icelandic cultural history in this period as a whole.

We should certainly not ignore the many unique aspects of Icelandic literature and culture in the middle ages (and the way in which Iceland was converted to Christianity as well as its political singularity until 1262–4 are in themselves factors that guarantee a certain amount of difference in aspects of cultural production too); but this should not lead us to deny the

Nevertheless, it seems apparent that the switch to verse did serve the aesthetic function of heightening the tone, and perhaps even stressing a link with the past (in the case of *Battle of Brunanburh*); verse in the Norse works might also have had such a role, as well as being presented as a source. In addition to O'Donoghue's views on the Norse texts, cf. Meulengracht Sørensen (2001); and on verse in the *ASC*, Scragg (2003); see also Angelika Lutz's examination of what might be an effort to preserve the elevated register of verse in the Latin prose adaptation of the *ASC* (2000).

¹⁰⁰ Similarly White (2005: 11–13). White also suggests that given the clear similarities between Orderic and the Norse histories, studying the “relatively well-documented workshop” of Orderic might help us understand “the historical method” of the Scandinavian authors (2005: 11). Obviously, as stated above, one must be very sensitive to the differences in context and historical traditions between the works compared; for all the points of contact between Anglo-Norman and Old Norse historiography, the former had the weight of several more centuries of Anglo-Saxon and Frankish written historical tradition about their respective lands and peoples than was the case anywhere in Scandinavia; and the socio-economic dynamics between monarchy, magnates and church were arguably quite unique in Iceland until its absorption in the Norwegian kingdom under Hákon Hákonarson.

fact that Iceland was, nevertheless, indeed a part of western Christendom and had been for generations by the time our extant texts were written. It is well to bear in mind Margaret Clunies Ross's recent sensitive re-assertions of Icelandic uniqueness, albeit not as something apart from, but rather within the broader context of European, Christian literature: Icelanders fully adopted the intellectual trends current in other parts of Europe, but managed to integrate these with their own traditions and an awareness of their own difference.¹⁰¹ This, it must be said, is probably true of every region of medieval Europe, with the difference in Iceland being that the relative ease of conversion and thus integration into Christendom meant that there was a less aggressive effort explicitly to Christianise earlier inheritances than in some other areas of Europe.¹⁰² However, we should not forget the extensive range of contacts between Iceland and the rest of Europe, most especially England, Normandy and Germany.¹⁰³ As Gabriel Turville-Petre pointed out as early as 1953, we must bear in mind

¹⁰¹ Clunies Ross (2000; 2009a); similar arguments are presented by Torfi Tulinius (2009), and Simek (2009), who rejects firmly and to my mind convincingly any notion of an Icelandic *Sonderkultur*, arguing instead that insofar as the Icelanders were unique, it was because of "a not insubstantial cognitive surplus" (196) used in incorporating a common European heritage within their own (vernacular) traditions, rather than a result of a lack of absorption of non-native culture. For a contrasting viewpoint, cf. Bagge (2009).

¹⁰² There has long been debate (albeit not very conclusive) about how the *Íslendingasögur* relate to other forms of medieval European literature, and the extent of non-native influence on them (the question of foreign influence on the *konungasögur* has only begun to be addressed more recently); cf. Clover (1985: 251–3) for a summary of the older scholarship, and the influential works of Clover (1982); and Lönnroth (1965); more recently, on the *Skaldsagas*, see Finlay (2001). See also Danielsson (2002b: 369–76), for a very brief consideration of possible foreign influences on the kings' sagas; Danielsson concludes, however, that the main forces behind their origins must be native to Scandinavia.

¹⁰³ There was also extensive contact with eastern Europe, but potential cultural influence from this direction has been less well studied. An exception is Hilda Ellis Davidson's monograph on the vikings in the east: the author believes that Scandinavian mythology was possibly coloured in a number of ways by the eastern journeys of the vikings/Varangians (1976: 269–317). The matter has also been studied from an archaeological point of view by Mats Roslund, who unfortunately scarcely discusses the nature of influence beyond its effect on pottery (2007); he finds, however, that there were in fact many relations between Slavs and Scandinavians, and a fair number of Slavic settlements in eastern Scandinavia, reaching a high point during the early twelfth century (see also the critical response to this book in Urbańczyk 2010). Haki Antonsson has recently suggested the possibility of some influence from Kievan Rus on the cult of Óláfr helgi Haraldsson (2007: 115–21), but it seems impossible to establish any compelling arguments for such a connection. See also the brief observations in Sverrir Jakobsson (2006) on the place of the east in the imagination of the saga-writers; and in more detail on the place of the 'austurvegr' in the medieval Icelandic worldview, see Sverrir Jakobsson (2005: 217–45). The Fourteenth International Saga Conference had as its theme *Á Austrvega*, and a number of the preprint papers thus deal with the east in Scandinavia (Ney, Williams and Ljungqvist, eds. 2009).

“how closely the literature of Iceland was linked with that of Europe”.¹⁰⁴ Equally important to note is that within Iceland, as elsewhere, there was no “vast zone of silence” between clerical and lay culture;¹⁰⁵ indeed, it may have been that these spheres were even more closely linked in Iceland than elsewhere, a fact that, as Gunnar Karlsson has recently suggested, might have made a positive contribution to the level of vernacular literary culture in Iceland in the decades around 1200.¹⁰⁶ (In this regard it is worth recalling Ármann Jakobsson’s suggestion that there is actually little difference in the image of kingship between Theodoricus and the vernacular, lay sagas.)¹⁰⁷ This too, however, must be seen within the broader context of the growth of vernacular literacy in western Europe as a whole in the same period.¹⁰⁸

Although it has been suggested that there was an increasing divide between clerical and lay cultures in Iceland after the mid-twelfth century,¹⁰⁹ this should not be exaggerated. At least till c.1200, the senior figures of the church continued to be drawn from the prominent secular families;¹¹⁰ Snorri Sturluson himself had a deacon as foster-father,¹¹¹ and the influence of Latin ecclesiastical scholarship has been detected in the writing of *Snorra Edda*—though it is unclear exactly how its author would have accessed such writings;¹¹² and a number of sagas, *Msk* included, have

¹⁰⁴ Turville-Petre (1953: vi); paralleled by the more recent statements of Clunies Ross (2000; 2009a).

¹⁰⁵ Momigliano (1963: 96), with regard to pagan and Christian historiography in the fourth century. In this context see also the important paper of Wormald (1978) with regard to Anglo-Saxon England; I have discussed the issue elsewhere with regard to ‘national’ histories and narratives about the distant, non-Roman, non-biblical past in the early middle ages (Ghosh 2009).

¹⁰⁶ Gunnar Karlsson (2004: 447–56).

¹⁰⁷ Ármann Jakobsson (1997: 266–7).

¹⁰⁸ Similarly Clunies Ross (2009a: 169).

¹⁰⁹ Turville-Petre (1953: 140).

¹¹⁰ On the continuing educational and familial bonds between the secular and ecclesiastical hierarchies, see Guðrún Nordal (2001: 117–95); Gunnar Karlsson (2004: 411–58); Schier (1994); Sverrir Jakobsson (2009: 160–3); Torfi Tulinius (2009: 203–5); Würth (1998: 192–205); and more generally, on the ways in which Church and society shaped each other in Iceland between c.1000 and c.1200, see Gunnar Karlsson (2004: 369–458); Orri Vesteinsson (2000).

¹¹¹ Whaley (1991: 29).

¹¹² Dronke and Dronke (1977); Faulkes (1978–9; 1983; 1993). Against the objections of Faulkes (1993) that Snorri probably did not know Latin, one must observe firstly that the fact that Snorri cites no Latin author directly does not mean he did not know Latin; more importantly, access to what was contained in Latin texts could often be—and most likely was—mediated through reading aloud and translation (Mortensen 2000b: 149–54).

been associated with the Benedictine monasteries at Munkaþverá¹¹³ and Þingeyrar.¹¹⁴ Several studies have stressed that there was no clear boundary between ‘clerical’ and ‘lay’ historical writing;¹¹⁵ Rudolf Simek stated recently that there is no justification for “talking about a completely separate culture that only rested on native lore to the exclusion, or at least part-rejection, of Latin secular learning”,¹¹⁶ and Vésteinn Ólason has asserted that “the origins of Icelandic literature with secular themes must [...] be sought in the close cooperation between members of the chieftain class with secular and historical interests and the clergy”.¹¹⁷ Nevertheless, one should not go too far in the other direction and eliminate all distinction between more religious and more secular texts: there could be works with more explicitly clerical/religious inclinations (for example, *Ólhelg* or, to a somewhat lesser extent, *HARN*), and those with less of an interest in the *heilsgeschichtlich* aspects of their subjects (all the compendia fit into this category, though one should not ignore the central place of the saga of Óláfr helgi in *Hkr*). This need not have to do with whether or not the authors were clerics, and, I must stress, is equally true of other European historical traditions: compare, for example, William of Malmesbury’s *Gesta regum Anglorum*, a work by a cleric but with relatively little explicit concern to elucidate the working of salvation history, and Otto of Freising’s *Chronica sive De civitatibus duobus* (1143–6),¹¹⁸ in which salvation history might indeed be said to be explicitly the main concern of the author. Nor does such a distinction in emphasis necessarily have to do with the language used; once again, the continent provides, apart from innumerable vernacular texts that seem to be overwhelmingly ‘secular’, many examples of vernacular works on secular themes that also have religious content, for example the Middle High German vernacular verse chronicle, the *Kaiserchronik* (c.1150),¹¹⁹ which is certainly deeply concerned with salvation history.¹²⁰

¹¹³ Andersson (1993); Andersson and Gade (2000: 67–72).

¹¹⁴ Würth (1998: 201–2).

¹¹⁵ Ármann Jakobsson (1997: 45–6); Jónas Kristjánsson (1988); Phelpstead (2007: 196–202); Whaley (1993a: 50–2).

¹¹⁶ Simek (2009: 195).

¹¹⁷ Vésteinn Ólason (2007: 33).

¹¹⁸ Lammers (ed. and trans. 1960).

¹¹⁹ Schröder (ed. 1895).

¹²⁰ On William: Thomson and Winterbottom (1999); Thomson (2003); on Otto: Goetz (1984); Goetz (1999); on the *Kaiserchronik*: Nellmann (1963); Ohly (1969); Matthews (forthcoming); the latter is particularly of use for placing this work in the wider context of vernacular and Latin production of works spanning the boundaries of ‘history’ and ‘fiction’.

In addition to (more or less) secular histories, many scholars have stressed the influence on the first wave of historical writing, both in Latin and the vernacular, of hagiographic models, including Gregory the Great's *Dialogues*,¹²¹ and the sagas of the two Óláfrs, at least, belonging to the first set of Norse historical texts, were well known to later saga authors—and so possibly was, therefore, the model of Latin hagiography.¹²² Furthermore, as Carl Phelpstead has recently reiterated,¹²³ even two 'secular' sagas composed before the compendia, **Hryggjarstykki* and *Sverris saga*, seem to have drawn on hagiographic models; this can, of course, only be postulated for the former work, but the influence of hagiographic conventions seems to be clear in *Sverris saga* (which was, after all, composed by an abbot), and it has been suggested that this work also influenced *Hkr*.¹²⁴

In a very useful essay on the development of literature in Iceland and Sweden, Kurt Schier has reiterated how dependent it was on the church, and specifically on the foundation of Benedictine monasteries in Iceland; in Sweden, in contrast, the bulk of monastic foundations were of the newer, reforming orders.¹²⁵ The Benedictines in other parts

Its religious leanings notwithstanding, the *Kaiserchronik* should not, however, be taken necessarily as a coherently programmatic, religious text in the manner of Otto's chronicle (I am grateful to Sarah Bowden for discussion on this point); in this respect, perhaps future research might wish to compare it with *Hkr*, which also has many religious elements and of which indeed the central third, on Óláfr helgi Haraldsson, is in many ways a hagiographic narrative, without *Hkr* as a whole being dominated by a coherent religious programme.

¹²¹ This was first stressed by Turville-Petre in a formulation cited too often to be repeated here (1953: 142–3). More recent scholarship has modified his (perhaps slightly exaggerated) thesis, mostly with regard to the influence of hagiography on the *Íslendingasögur*, but nevertheless confirms the view that hagiographic writings had a very significant influence on early written Icelandic literature: Cormack (1993; 1994); Foote (1994); Jónas Kristjánsson (1988); Phelpstead (2007, esp. 195–224). On the influence of Gregory: Turville-Petre (1953, 136); Crook (2001); Wolf (2001). On the influence of foreign sources on the beginnings of saga composition, see also the references cited above, n. 102.

¹²² On the sagas of the Óláfrs and the hagiographic influences on their composition: Andersson (2006: 21–59; 2009); Del Zotto (2005; this work is primarily on narratives of Óláfr Haraldsson, but also discusses other traces of hagiographical influence in kings' sagas); Mortensen (2006); Phelpstead (2007: 117–58); Røthe (2004). Cf. also Andersson (2004a) on the relative chronology of the vernacular and Latin sagas of the two Óláfrs; and the earlier work of Fidjestøl (1997a) on Latin and non-native influences on the sagas of Óláfr helgi Haraldsson. See also Battista (2003), on the difficulties of establishing a direct correspondence between a putative source text and an Icelandic saints' life; she argues that one should operate with an inclusive concept of sources, given the extent to which Latin sources and models were adapted by Icelandic hagiographers.

¹²³ Phelpstead (2007, 198–9), with references to earlier scholarship.

¹²⁴ Beyschlag (1986); Whaley (1993a: 46).

¹²⁵ Schier (1994).

of Europe had long cultivated a tradition of composing secular histories, and this could, Schier suggests, explain the encouragement of secular literature in Iceland (in contrast to the relative dearth of such literature in Sweden until the late thirteenth century).¹²⁶ Moreover, in Iceland (as elsewhere), the monastic houses were very closely linked to the secular elite, and were never fully divorced from its values.¹²⁷ Coupled with the peaceful and relatively conflict-free adoption of Christianity, these two factors probably contributed to the preservation of native and often pagan material in Iceland, including perhaps some of the poems regarding pre-Christian kings (especially such works as *Ynglingatal* and *Háleygjatal*). For our purposes, though, it is more important that the works thought to be relatively ancient, including the eddic poems and the mythological material of *Snorra Edda*, were recorded late.¹²⁸ The first manuscripts in Iceland are, to be sure, overwhelmingly in Icelandic, perhaps suggesting a lack of Latinity;¹²⁹ but the earliest manuscripts (all from the twelfth

¹²⁶ White notes that the majority of monastic houses in both Normandy and Iceland in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were Benedictine (2005: 106); William of Malmesbury, Orderic Vitalis, William of Jumièges, and Robert of Torigni were all members of this order. On the Benedictine traditions of historical writing in the central middle ages, cf. Vanderputten (2001), and Ward (2000; 2002) (I am grateful to Marc Saurette for the references, and to him and Isabelle Cochelin for discussion on this point). If one accepts that the influence of the Benedictine order played a role in the production of Icelandic histories, one also has to give heed to the wider intellectual context and functions of historical writing for the Benedictines, and more generally for monastic historians in this period.

¹²⁷ Schier (1994: 245–57); similarly also Mortensen (2000b). For useful comparanda from Anglo-Saxon England, see Wormald (1978); more generally on early medieval practice, see Wickham (2009: 184–90). For the social, legal and economic connections between secular lordship and ecclesiastical institutions in western Europe (though largely excluding both Scandinavia, and the issues relating specifically to cultural contact, influence, and difference between secular and clerical spheres), Wood (2006) is now fundamental. On the relations between Icelandic chieftains and the clergy, see Gunnar Karlsson (2004: 411–58), Jón Viðar Sigurðsson (2007: 180–4), and Sverrir Jakobsson (2009: 160–63). For a more general history of the Church and Christianity in Iceland, see Jón Jóhannesson (1974: 118–221), and for a recent brief overview, Byock (2001: 302–7; 324–40). More recently and with a more nuanced approach to the process of Christianisation and its social and political consequences: Orri Vésteinsson (2000). Specifically on the conversion as presented in literary sources: Jochens (1999); and Gunnar Karlsson (2004: 369–410) on the role of Iceland's political structures in the conversion. For an introductory survey of Christianisation and the rise of the independence of the Church in Scandinavia, seen from a European perspective, see Kaufhold (2001: 82–98; 106–29).

¹²⁸ On the following, see Schier (1994).

¹²⁹ See however Gottskálk Jenson's cogent if speculative argument for a greater level of Latinity in Iceland than normally assumed (2004), based on the good evidence for the existence of now-lost Latin texts (including Oddr Snorrason's life of Óláfr Tryggvason and the lives of the bishops Þorlákr Þórhallson and Jón Qgmundarson), and more importantly, on an analysis of the language of some of the extant Latin material, which presupposes a high level of Latinity among the audience. Gottskálk's views are in accord with the more

century) include a gloss;¹³⁰ a skaldic poem on a non-native Christian saint (*Plácítúsdrápa*);¹³¹ an *Elucidarius*;¹³² a *Physiologus*;¹³³ and, crucial for our purposes, fragments of *Veraldar saga*.¹³⁴ This last work, a world chronicle, is derived in no small part from Bede and Isidore, but is an independent compilation by an Icelander who was obviously well-versed in contemporary Latin historiography, and appears to have been written in the first half of the twelfth century. The existence of *Veraldar saga* shows not only an early dissemination of Latin histories in Iceland, but also that the continental trend of compiling compendious world-histories was followed in Iceland as well—and, moreover, that there was thought to be a broader audience for such material than just the Latinate clergy.¹³⁵ Among works thought to date from the period before and just after 1200 (for which, however, no such early manuscripts survive) are also *Rómverja saga*, based on Sallust and Lucan (written probably before 1190);¹³⁶ *Trójumanna saga* (written in the first decades of the thirteenth century), based on Dares Phrygius's history of the Trojans; and *Merlínussþá* and the *Breta sögur* (both from around 1200), works of British history based on Geoffrey of Monmouth.¹³⁷

recent overview provided by Clunies Ross (2009a), and anticipated somewhat by Stefanie Würth (1998: 205), who believes that “a relatively large circle of people in Iceland had a basic knowledge of the Latin language”; see in addition Scardigli and Raschellà (1989). More generally, on the Latin background to Icelandic literary production, see also Turville-Petre (1953); while he assumes a high level of influence from Latin models, he also believes that very little Latin literature was produced in Iceland (thus similarly Gunnar Karlsson (2004: 434–40), in contrast to which Clunies Ross (2005: 141–50), assumes a greater level of Latinity and influence therefrom on vernacular literary production. See also Simek (1990) for a study of the wide-ranging reception of cosmographic and ethnographic Latin works in Iceland and Norway from the second half of the twelfth century onwards.

¹³⁰ Reykjavík, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum, GKS 1812 IV 4to; Scardigli and Raschellà (1989).

¹³¹ Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske samling, Nordiske Forskningsinstitut, AM 673 b 4to; Clunies Ross (ed. and trans. 2007: 179–220).

¹³² Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske samling, Nordiske Forskningsinstitut, AM 674 a 4to; Firchow (ed. and trans. 1992).

¹³³ Reykjavík, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum, AM 673 a I 4to; Halldór Hermannsson (ed. 1938).

¹³⁴ Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske samling, Nordiske Forskningsinstitut, AM 655 VII 4° and AM 655 VIII 4°; Jakob Benediktsson (ed. 1944).

¹³⁵ Würth (1998: 173–7).

¹³⁶ For a detailed study of *Rómverja saga*'s sources, cf. Þorbjörg Helgadóttir (1996), in addition to the work of Würth cited in the next note. The text exists in two recensions, of which the older one is of more concern to us; both are edited in Þorbjörg Helgadóttir (ed. 2010).

¹³⁷ Turville-Petre (1953: 109–42). See Würth (1998: 9–81; 2006), for detailed studies of the translators' style and the manuscript traditions of *Rómverja saga*, *Trójumanna saga* and *Breta sögur*; cf. also Magnús Fjalldal (2005: 83–7) for a brief overview of *Breta sögur*'s

By the time the great compendia were composed, therefore, Icelanders had begun to translate foreign works of secular history into their own tongue (and it is surely no coincidence that historical literature is so prominent among the early translations); it is notable—and extremely important—that many of these translations predate the composition of the compendia. Furthermore, after Ari's *Ísl*, the first written literary works in Icelandic were lives of saints, which were dependent in many ways on Scandinavian, and ultimately on foreign Latin texts.¹³⁸ Sverrir Tómasson's detailed study of the prologues of Norse texts has shown in particular how these sections of the works were often deeply influenced in terms of their rhetoric and structure by Latin models,¹³⁹ and he argues that historical writing in Iceland needs to be understood against the background of education in learned theories of literature, rhetoric, and the function of history. Phelpstead has recently suggested that while early hagiographic writing in Iceland uses a more vivid form of direct speech than its immediate Latin models, it was most probably influenced by the example of the bible—and the use of direct speech is one of the prominent stylistic features of the kings' sagas too.¹⁴⁰ These suggestions should alert us to the horizons of learning in Iceland; the kings' sagas did not arise out of some sort of pristine native traditions, but within a climate of clerical and secular learning encouraged by the secular and clerical magnates, which actively encouraged the translation and adaptation into Icelandic of foreign histories that had been influential elsewhere.¹⁴¹

reception of Geoffrey. *Trójumanna saga* exists in two recensions; the earlier one is edited by Jonna Louis-Jensen (ed. 1981), and translated in Würth (trans. 1996). *Merlínusspá* is transmitted as a part of *Breta sögur*, which is edited by Jón Sigurðsson (ed. 1848–9), and translated in Würth (trans. 1996).

¹³⁸ Jónas Kristjánsson (1988); Mortensen (2006); Sverrir Tómasson (1988).

¹³⁹ Sverrir Tómasson (1988: 55–69). See, however, Simon (1958; 1959–60), the fundamental study of the prologues of European Latin histories up to the twelfth century; it is clear that the prologue of *Hkr*, at least, diverges quite significantly from the topoi of the majority of Latin works.

¹⁴⁰ Phelpstead (2007: 220–2); drawing on Foote (1994). On style, cf. Phelpstead (2007: 202–22).

¹⁴¹ Good introductions to the various genres of historical writing apart from the kings' sagas, including translated histories and pseudo-historical works (but excluding the *Íslendingasögur*) are provided by Sverrir Tómasson (2006: 76–98), Whaley (2000), and Würth (2005). I should make it clear that while I believe the foreign sources would have influenced native literary production, I do not mean to imply that the influence was in one direction only: it is obvious that indigenous narrative models also affected the way in which the Latin texts were transferred into an Icelandic context. This has been studied extensively, and is not especially pertinent to my argument; see Würth's detailed study

While we have only sparse evidence regarding the actual content of education before the mid-thirteenth century,¹⁴² the monastic and cathedral schools seem not to have differed much in their curricula from their counterparts in the rest of Europe, and there seems to have been a fairly widespread dissemination of learning (frequently derived from Latin and foreign sources) among laypeople, and in the vernacular, often orally, by reading out from a manuscript (this seems to apply also to the translations of Latin historical works).¹⁴³ In this context, Mortensen's suggestion that the "horizon of use" was not narrowly limited to those who had direct access to libraries and could read Latin is important: learned Latin literature had mixed audiences, and could be mediated through oral retellings and paraphrase in the vernacular, as well as vernacular translations, and texts written in Latin need not have been intended solely for international audiences.¹⁴⁴ Guðrún Nordal's monograph on poetic theory on the twelfth and thirteenth centuries studies a particular form of such mediation between Latin and vernacular traditions, suggesting that theorising about skaldic verse was closely related to the study of the *ars grammatica* in church schools, and moreover, that clerics trained in Latin were also often very knowledgeable about purportedly ancient skaldic poems, and even composed skaldic verse themselves;¹⁴⁵ this further reveals the extent of interpenetration between the written and Latinate and the oral and vernacular cultures.¹⁴⁶

(1998), and more recently Eldevik (2004), on the nature of Icelandic influence in the translations of the classical works.

¹⁴² The evidence is discussed in Clunies Ross (2005: 141–5); Guðrún Nordal (2001: 19–29); Sverrir Tómasson (1988: 15–35); Würth (1998: 197–9).

¹⁴³ Würth (1998: 122; 213–17).

¹⁴⁴ Mortensen (2000b: 149–54). An excellent analysis and demonstration of an expanded concept of the (oral and written) reception of written vernacular texts—which could be read out from a manuscript, partly memorised and performed, as well as being simply read—is presented by Dennis Green (1994) in his study of German material between the ninth and thirteenth centuries. Green's book is rigorously empirical, based on an analysis of the vocabulary of reading, listening, and performing, and the ways in which such activities are presented, across a large corpus of texts; an analogous study for Scandinavia is a serious desideratum of research.

¹⁴⁵ Guðrún Nordal (2001).

¹⁴⁶ Guðrún Nordal (2001: 29–30) cites a striking example of such interpenetration from the saga of Þorlákr Þórhallson, bishop of Skálholt from 1174, who was educated at Oddi a generation before Snorri Sturluson: in telling us about Þorlákr's youth, the saga author writes: "sú var þá hans iðja er hann var á ungum alldri at hann var löngrum at bóknámi, en at riti optliga, á bœnum þess i millum, en nam þá er eigi dvalði annat þat er móðir hans kunni kenna honum, ættvísi ok mannfæði" (Ásdís Egilsdóttir, ed. 2002b: 50–1: "In his youth, he kept himself busy in such a way that he spent long hours in studying books, and often wrote and prayed in the intervening periods, and when he was not engaged with

Margaret Cormack argues, in contrast, that one reason for the lack of poetry in the *Biskupa sögur*—sagas about Icelandic bishops—was a distaste for vernacular poetry in clerical circles because of its secular, and more importantly pagan association; this was only overcome during the course of the thirteenth century.¹⁴⁷ Such a difference in scholarly perspective arises naturally depending on whether one uses evidence of clerics receiving and composing poetry, or of clerics' disdain. Both attitudes existed, and are attested not just in Iceland, but elsewhere in medieval Europe in the centuries immediately following conversion, with more or less widespread tolerance apparently setting in only after two centuries post-conversion in many regions.¹⁴⁸ Cormack suggests that the secular clergy had a more relaxed attitude,¹⁴⁹ which might be the case—known poets are more often bishops than monks—but the monk Gunnlaugr Leifsson clearly knew the art of skaldic versification well. Cormack also notes that in some cases, the clerical members of a family are not known to have composed verse, even if their secular relatives did;¹⁵⁰ but this surely reinforces the point that there was no great divide between secular and clerical worlds.

The recent scholarship makes abundantly clear points already suggested by Turville-Petre in 1953: the likely secular audience for the sagas had strong ties with the culture of the Icelandic Church, and the latter in turn was—particularly, though not exclusively, in the persons of its senior figures—heavily invested in the vernacular culture and traditions of Iceland, as well as closely connected to the world of Latin learning (ecclesiastical and secular) in the rest of Scandinavia (especially Lund, an important seat of scholarship),¹⁵¹ and in England, France and Germany. We should be attentive to the possibility of this broader intellectual climate nourishing, if not necessarily the exact words and information, then at least the attitudes and methods of the authors of the kings' sagas. It is hardly unreasonable to assume that the audiences for the translations of Latin

other things, he learnt whatever his mother knew to teach him, genealogy and the history of men"). It is surely possible that a person such as Snorri might have enjoyed similarly mixed influences during his upbringing at Oddi.

¹⁴⁷ Cormack (2003).

¹⁴⁸ For early medieval comparanda, see Ghosh (2009: 206–41) with further references, of which see most importantly Wickham (2009) and Wormald (1978).

¹⁴⁹ Cormack (2003: 42–3).

¹⁵⁰ Cormack (2003: 46).

¹⁵¹ On Lund, see e.g. the essays in Friis-Jensen and Skovgaard-Petersen (eds 2000), esp. that of Mortsensen (2000b), with further references; and more recently, cf. Coviaux (2006), on connections between Lund and both France and Germany, and Norway and Iceland.

works overlapped with the audiences for the kings' sagas—presuming that the latter did indeed have a reception in Iceland, and not just in Norway. It seems to me absurd not to reckon with the possibility that the authors of the compendia—at least of *Msk* and *Hkr*—knew the secular histories mentioned above, and probably also the saints' lives, in some form (perhaps even in the original Latin). We have, then, evidence that the intellectual climate in which the compendia, at least, were composed, included knowledge of a broad range of insular and continental Norman histories, some ancient and earlier medieval histories (Sallust, Lucan, Isidore, Bede, Einhard and Notker), and potentially some more recent works from the empire; all these might have been available only in the form of excerpts, and perhaps even in some cases in oral retellings. However, given that we know that Sallust, Lucan, Isidore, Bede, Dares Phrygius, and Geoffrey of Monmouth (at the very least) were available in writing to their translators in Iceland by 1200 at the latest (and in some cases considerably earlier), it should not seem implausible that the other sources postulated by White and his predecessors in this field were also available, more or less whole, and in written form (they might even have been translated).

As we have seen, even narratives that go back to oral traditions could be influenced by stories brought back by travellers, perhaps transferred from Norman, Greek, Russian or even Arabic models; it has long been known that Scandinavians were great travellers in the middle ages, but more attention should now be given to aspects of cultural interchange that may have taken place along with their journeys.¹⁵² Furthermore, the

¹⁵² Dominik Waßenhoven's prosopographical study provides an outstanding resource for further study of Scandinavians abroad, though it is not very illuminating with regard to the cultural consequences of these contacts (2006; see also Wetzstein 2007 for references to additional studies concerning administrative and legal contact between Scandinavia and the continent that are not cited by Waßenhoven). However, using especially the example of archbishop Eysteinn Erlendsson (2006: 105–39), Waßenhoven does reiterate the importance of institutional relations between monasteries and bishoprics in Scandinavia and the rest of Europe, and how ecclesiastical contacts might have influenced the growth of literacy, the production of hagiographies, and perhaps even certain other political and cultural practices like the anointing of kings and marriage customs. On Scandinavians abroad, see also White (2005: 13–24) on Norwegians and Icelanders abroad: he finds fewer Norwegian than Icelandic travellers; Waßenhoven, basing himself largely on Foote (1984a), finds that from the twelfth century Danes and Norwegians predominate among Scandinavians abroad. See also the essays collected in Simek and Engel (eds 2004), which present a brief overview of literary sources for vikings in the Rhineland, and in more detail examine the evidence of archaeology. Discussions of Scandinavians abroad are given in Ellis Davidson (1976); Foote and Wilson (1970); Sawyer (1982); Sawyer (ed. 1997); for viking activity in Spain, see Morales Romero (2004). Forte, Oram and Pedersen (2005), which is intended as an accessible history for non-specialists of what the authors

influence of foreigners (primarily ecclesiastics) in Scandinavia is also something worthy of further study: Scandinavians learnt about the wider world not only by travelling in it, but also through interaction with missionaries, clerics, traders and diplomats, who brought with them stories, written and oral, and would have had some cultural impact. In this regard, the early influence of England (particularly on Iceland and Norway) is once more probably of paramount importance, and the long use of the vernacular in England (as opposed to the continent) might well have had something to do with the preponderance of vernacular learning in Iceland—and here one should note, as Clunies Ross reminds us, that the flourishing of the vernacular in England and Ireland is coupled with a level of Latinity at the very least comparable to that on the continent.¹⁵³ I would suggest that the upsurge in historical writing in Iceland around 1200 must be understood against the backdrop of the blossoming of historiography in Latin and the vernaculars in other regions of Europe, many of which (England, France and Germany) had close religious, cultural, political, and economic contact with many parts of Scandinavia. A greater understanding of the various forms of historical consciousness in Europe around 1200 cannot but illuminate also our understanding of the function of historical narrative in Iceland; only by studying the kings' sagas within the broader

term “viking empires”, or viking domination outside Scandinavia, is not generally reliable for its historical narrative (it appears to be based principally on secondary sources, and a not very careful reading of the primary texts, thus providing such bizarre statements as “[Haraldr hárfagri] is generally described by later sagas as the cause of the Scandinavian expansion to the west beause of his militant Christianity” (180)); it is, however, useful on matters relating to ships and navigation (cf. the critical reviews of Boulhosa (2006), Christiansen (2006b), and Hudson (2007)). Jesch (2004b) discusses the problematic nature of the sources with regard to continental Europe; Ebel (1987) provides a thorough survey of evidence relating to economic relations up to 1200; Christiansen (2006a: 214–35) gives a more critical view of Scandinavian activity abroad than that of most other studies, and is a useful corrective to some of the occasionally over-enthusiastic earlier work.

¹⁵³ Clunies Ross (2009a: 168). On the foreign influences in the early Scandinavian churches see e.g. Sawyer, Sawyer and Wood (eds 1987); for the effects of contact with Anglo-Saxons, cf. Abram (2004); Abrams (1995; 1996); Sawyer (2006); Toy (2009); Williams (2001); Würth (1998: 219–26). On the Christianisation of Iceland more generally and the foreign influences in that process: Orri Vésteinsson (2000). For Icelandic contact with foreigners and their languages in Iceland, see McDougall (1987–8), who finds extensive influence of the English, the Germans, and after the mid-twelfth century the French, and concludes that many educated Icelanders would have known some Latin and possibly some French, and would have had some familiarity with English and the insular script at least until around 1200.

intellectual climates of Iceland, Scandinavia, and Europe (especially England, Normandy and Germany),¹⁵⁴ can we begin to discern their value and the function of the histories they narrate within the conception of the past in medieval Scandinavia, and within the intellectual history of medieval western Europe.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁴ Cf. Mortensen's examples of ways in which the broader intellectual horizons can be traced through indications in extant texts (2000a; 2000b).

¹⁵⁵ A useful and quite comprehensive survey of European 'national' historiographies between c.1000 and c.1500 is provided by Kersken (1995); a vastly abbreviated summary is in Kersken (2003). A standard general handbook on medieval historiography is provided by Schmale (1985), with references to the earlier scholarship. Of the theoretical studies of the past two decades, the many works of Goetz are among the most substantive and stimulating, though his textual examples are largely restricted to Germany; see especially his monograph on historical consciousness in the high medieval period (1999), his articles on the relation of history to fiction and medieval historians' attitudes to their sources (1992; 2003; 2006), and his survey of the place of historical writing within medieval intellectual theory (1985), on which last theme, the earlier work of Melville (1982) should also be consulted. See further the fundamental study of Werner (1987) on the role of historical writing as a source of political and moral education for rulers. I noted earlier that there has not been proper comparative study of political poetry in medieval Europe; although the existence of Kersken's work means that prose historiography is somewhat better served, his monograph is not really a discursive study, but rather a descriptive survey of the material and some of the scholarship. Since most comparative scholarship on medieval historiography is restricted to Latin texts, proper analytical, comparative studies remain an urgent desideratum in this field too.

APPENDIX: PARALLEL NARRATIVES IN SCANDINAVIAN AND
FOREIGN SOURCES¹⁵⁶

A: Using Birds to Burn a Borg

A1: *The Roman de Brut of Wace (the translation appended is that of Weiss)*¹⁵⁷

Muissuns od reiz e od glu pristrent
E en croisés de noiz fu mistrent;
Od le fu firent enz repundre
Esprises de lin e de tundre;
As piez de muissuns les pendirent,
Merveilluse veisdie firent.
Al seir, quant vint a l'avesprer,
Laissierent les mussuns aler;
Cil s'alerent la nuit logier
La u il soleient nier,
Es tas des blez e es muidluns
E es severundes des maisuns.
Li feus nurri e eschalfa,
La vile esprist e aluma.
Bretun virent la vile ardeir,
Flambe voler, maisuns chaeir;
A cumbatre se cunreerent,
Mes vencu furent, kar poi erent.

They caught sparrows with snares and bird-lime and set fire to nutshells; inside those they placed, next to the flames, inflammable matter of flax and tinder. They attached them to the sparrows' feet and performed an amazing trick. In the evening, when it came to nightfall, they released the sparrows; these flew off to spend the night where they were accustomed to nest, in heaps of corn and in haystacks and in the eaves of houses. The fires spread and, becoming very hot, set the town alight and aflame. The Britons saw the town burning, flames leaping and houses falling; they prepared to fight but, because they were few, were defeated.

¹⁵⁶ Where the Norse narratives are repeated in all three compendia, for reasons of space, only *Msk* is cited as it is the earliest (and invariably longest) Norse version, which is followed often quite closely by *Fsk* and *Hkr*, though it would probably be worthwhile also to examine the reasons for the divergences between the latter texts and *Msk* more closely. White (2005) prints many of the parallel texts in the *Hkr* versions; references to the *Fsk* passages are given at appropriate points in the footnotes above when these narratives are first introduced.

¹⁵⁷ Weiss (ed. and trans. 1999: 13593–610).

A2: *Saxo Grammaticus on Haddingus*¹⁵⁸

Qui cum a Lokero captus omnem prædictionis euentum certissimis rerum experimentis circa se peractum sensisset, Handwanum, Hellesponti regem, apud Dunam urbem inuictis murorum prædiis uallatum moenibusque, non acie resistantem bello pertentat. Quorum fastigio oppugnationis aditum prohibente diversi generis aues loci illius domiciliis assuetas per aucupii peritos prendi iussit earumque pennis accensos igne fungos suffigi curauit. Quæ propria nidorum hospitia repetentes urbem incendio compleuere. Cuius extinguendi gratia concurrentibus oppidanis uacuas defensoribus portas reliquerunt.

After being captured by Lokerus, when he [sc. Haddingus], with the most certain proofs, perceived that every event of the prediction had been fulfilled upon him, he tested in war Handwanus, the king of Hellespont, at the town of Duna, surrounded by impregnable defences of walls; the latter resisted his attack not by means of a battle-line, but with the fortifications. Since the height of these fortifications prohibited the possibility of an assault, he commanded that birds of different species accustomed to living in that place be caught by men experienced in fowling, and had fungi kindled with fire bound under their wings. When the birds sought their own dwelling-places in their nests, they filled the town with fire. The townsfolk, rushing about to extinguish the fire, left the gates empty of defenders.

A3: *Msk*¹⁵⁹

Þar uoru uellir fagrir og slettir nær borginne og þar aa vollunum stodu tre fogr og limod uel þau er blomgut uoru og sem þar uæri skogr litill og flugu fuglar þangath jafnan vr borg um daga þeir er hreidr attu. Smafuglar foru þar ath matfongum aa daginn vtan borg enn flugu apr aa kuolldit ath sofa er þeir attu hier og huar hreidr j husþekium j borginne.

[...]

Nordbrigt mælti nu uid sina menn [...] hier er lækr eirn skamt fra borginne en þan sama leir sem þar er hia læknum er heitir bitumen þann leir skulum uær taka og ellta vm nætr so at borgarmenn uerdi eigi varir uit. þat

¹⁵⁸ Friis-Jensen and Zeeberg (ed. and trans. 2005: l.vi,10); Ellis Davidson and Fisher (trans: 1979–80, 25).

¹⁵⁹ *Msk*: 69–72 (*MskAG*: 139–41). *Fsk*: 231–2 (*FskF*: 186) and *Hkr* III: 76–7 (*HkrH*: 582) also give the same story; for reasons of space, the latter texts are not reproduced here, with the *Msk* account being given both because it is the fullest, and probably the earliest. Note that both the later accounts are less than half the length of the story given in *Msk* and state much more simply that Haraldr came up with a plan to tie burning wood to the backs of the birds; all the preliminary matter concerning mortar and bitumen is left out.

mun þa verða jafnt sem lim ef þat er til giort og með þessu sama lima menn jafnan borgir. sidan skulum uer ríða þessu lime aa tre þesse er hier standa utan borgar. en þat kann uerða so hart sem griot er þath þornar. sidan skulu ver ríða blautu liminu aa trein og með þessum radum skulum uer uinna þessa myklu borg. sidan skulu til koma þeir menn vorir er bezt kunnu við smafvga. oc kann vera at fvglonvm verþi vhogt at hefia fotrna af limonvm er leirino blavto er a ríþit. oc ef ver fengim valld þesa enna litlo borgar manna smafvglanna. þa kann vera at rað hittiz i at na e þeim er stórri ero oc meiri fire ser. Nv fara þeir sva með sem Norðbrict melir. oc dvgir þetta raþ. at foglarnir verþa fastir við trein. er þeir villdo fa ser matar. oc fa þeir nv tekit hondo marga smafvga af þesom brogbom. Þa melti Norþbrict. Nv er vel segir hann þesir foglar scola vinna borg með oss. Nv skal taca tre þat er tyrft er. oc eldnæmst. oc lata þar eld i innan litinn þann. bera þar i við brenno stein oc steypa vaxi vm vtan. siþan skal binda þess conar byrþar a bac foglonom sva at þeim verþi eigi vm afl at fliuga með. oc er nattar þa scola ver lata þa lavsa alla senn með þeim vmbvningi at hverr halfi byrþi a baci. oc get ec at þeir flivgi þa til setra sinna oc hreiþra i borginni sem þeir ero vanir. Þannoc er nv með farit. oc flivga foglar i borgina til hreiþra sinna oc vnga. en hvsin voro reyrþakit morg þa er fvglarnir bygðo. oc er eigi langt at biþa vnnz eldinom lystir i fiþri foglanna oc því nest i þeciona oc hvsin. oc brenn þa hvat af oþro oc geriz eldgangr mikill i borginni. En i oþro lagi voro þeir allir i hercleþom oc sokia þa at borginni allfast en borgar menn þottoz eigi vita hvi setti um ellz ganginn. oc atto nv at veriaz ollo senn elldinom oc atsocn þeira harþri. oc fengo eigi variz hvarotveggia. fengo þeir nv brotit hliþ stor a borginni. oc því nest ero þeir innan borgar. oc slær þar i orrosto. oc mannfall. oc eigi var þat lengi aðr borgar vrþo klöccqvir við allt saman oc gafv sic vpp. gecc nv þat sama folc með linleic oc litilleti at biða ser miscvnnar með ahyggio oc harmi. en iafnan aþr hofðo drembliga mælt til Norþbricz oc manna hans.

There were beautiful, mown fields near the town and in the fields there stood beautiful trees rich in branches and full of flower, like a little forest, and birds with their nests in the trees constantly flew to them from the town during the day. Small birds flew out of the town during the day to feed, and flew back in the evening to sleep where they had nests here and there in the thatched roofs of houses in the town.

[...]

Now Norðbrigt spoke to his men: “[...] there is a pond here close to the town, and the clay-like substance that is near the lake is called bitumen; we should take that clay and knead it at night so that the townspeople do not know [what we are doing]. When it is worked, it will become just like mortar, the same lime that men use to build towns. Afterward, we should smear this mortar on the trees that stand here outside the town, and it will become as hard as rock when it dries. And after that, we should rub soft mortar on the trees, and with this plan we shall seize this great town. After that, those men who are most familiar with little birds should come

forward; it will happen that the birds will find it difficult to lift their legs from the branches that have been rubbed with wet clay, and if we capture these little birds of the townspeople, it might be that we can find a means by which we can get those that are also bigger and more substantial." And now they did as Norðbriçt said, and his plan worked, so that the birds were stuck to the trees when they came to feed, and so they captured many small birds with these tricks. Then Norþbriçt said: "All is well," he said, "these birds will seize the town with us. Now we should get some wood that is resinous and very flammable, and light a small fire inside it, ignited with sulphur and sealed with wax on the outside. Then we should bind this load on the backs of the birds in a way that it does not exceed their strength to fly with it. And when night falls, we shall let the birds loose all together outfitted in this way so that each one has a load on its back. And I say that they will fly back to their homes and nests as they are accustomed to." And then this was done, and the birds flew into the city to their nests and their young. And the houses in which the birds nested were mostly thatched, and there was not long to wait before the fire ignited the feathers of the birds and right after that the roofs and the houses, and one caught fire from the next, and a great fire enveloped the town.

In the next moment, all the men, who were armed, attacked the town vigorously, and the townsfolk were not able to understand how the fire had started, and now they had to defend themselves simultaneously against the fire and the severe assault [of the besiegers], and they were unable to ward off both. They [the attackers] managed to break into the gate to the town, and all at once they were inside the town. Battle broke out, and slaughter, and it was not long before the townspeople lost heart against such odds and surrendered. The same people now asked humbly and meekly for mercy, full of anxiety and grief, who had earlier spoken haughtily to Norðbriçt and his men.

B: Pretending to Perish as a Prelude to Conquest

Bi: *Dudo of St Quentin, De moribus et actis primorum Normanniæ ducum*¹⁶⁰

Convocat illico omnium nequissimos, super sua fraudulenta dolositate consultores. Pandit illis secretum execrabile, quod conceperat furioso corde: "Imminente nocte, me mortuum nuntiate præsuli et comiti, et deposcite,

¹⁶⁰ Lair (ed. 1865: I,6–7); Christiansen (trans. 1998: 19–20).

nimum flentes, ut faciant me neophytum sua urbe sepeliri. Enses et armillas, et quicquid est mei juris, dicite vos daturos illis." Illi autem, ut jussum fuerat, ante dominos civitatis venientes, dixerunt ejulantes: "Noster senior vesterque filiolus, proh dolor! est defunctus. Precamur miseri ut in vestro monasterio sepeliri eum faciatis, et munera quæ vobis moriens jussit permaxima dari, recipiatis." Illi namque tali sophismate decepti, dandis et accipiendis muneribus quasi excæcati, spoponderunt corpus recipi et in monasterio decenter humari. Internuntii autem regressi renuntiaverunt quæ fraudulenter impetraverant funesti. Tunc contumax pestifer, gaudens super responsis eorum, uniuscujusque tribus mandat accersiri præcipuum. Congregatis autem omnibus, nequissimorum nequior dixit Alstignus: "Mihi modo facite feretrum, et superponite me quasi mortuum, arma quidem mecum in ipso collocate, et vos in gyrum circa ipsa flebiliter state; vos per plateas ululate, vestrosque me cogite plangere. Tumultuet vox vestra per cuncta nostra tentoria. Concrepet vox qui præsumt navibus cum cæteris cohortibus. Armillas et balteos ferri ante feretrum facite. Gemmis auroque politas secures ensesque exponite." Fit dicto citius quod mandarat funestus. Auditur clamor ululantium, tumultusque lugentium. Resonant montes pro vocibus dolose mœrentium tinnientes. Convocat præsul campanis gentem diffusam per totam civitatem. Venit clerus monasticis vestimentis indutus. Similiter principes illius urbis, martyrio coronandi. Affluit femineus sexus in exsilium deducendus. Pergunt unanimes contra monstrum feretro impositum. Bajulant scolastici candelabra et cruces, majoribus præcedentes. Advehitur a paganis Alstignus, vivus super feretrum positus; atque in exitu civitatis obviant christiani paganis. Ab utroque populo comportatur ad monasterium, quo sepulcrum ejus erat paratum. Præparat se episcopus, missam pro suo filiolo celebraturus. Choro stat et clerus, officiosissime cantare suetus. Ignorant trucidandi christiani dolum mortiferæ fraudis. Decantatur missa, solemniter celebrata. Participant omnes christiani mystico sacrificio Jesu Christi. His missarum solemnibus decenter expletis, paulatimque paganis congregatis, jussit præsul corpus ad sepulturam deferri. Pagani cum magno clamore petebant feretrum, et dicebant alternatim non eum sepeliendum. Stabant igitur christiani super responsis eorum stupefacti. Tunc Alstignus feretro desiluit, ensemque fulgentem vagina deripuit. Invasit funestus præsulem, librum manu tenentem. Jugulat præsulem, prostrato et comite, stantem clerum in ecclesia inermem. Obstruxerunt pagani ostia templi, ne posset ullus elabi. Tunc paganorum rabies trucidat christianos inermes.

He summons then the most evil of all the men to consult with them about his false trickery. He reveals to them a horrible secret that he devised in his raging heart: "As night approaches, announce that I am dead to the bishop and the count and beseech them with many tears that they should have me, a recent convert, buried in their city. Say that you will give them my swords and rings and whatever belongs to me." The men did as they were commanded, going lamenting before the lords of the

city and saying: "Our chief and your little son, alas! is dead. Wretched as we are, we beseech you to have him buried in your monastery, and you shall receive the great gifts that he, when dying, commanded should be given to you." Deceived by such trickery, and blinded by the prospect of the gifts to be given and received, the lords promised to receive the body and inter it honourably in the monastery. The messengers returned and reported what they had achieved as fraudulent mourners. Then the obstinate destroyer, rejoicing over the answers of the lords, commands the chief of each tribe to be summoned. When they had all congregated, Hasting, the vilest of the vile, said: "Now make me a bier, and place me on it as if I were dead, and put my weapons on it along with me, and stand around it in a circle weeping; cry out through the streets and make your men lament about me. Let your voice resound through all our tents. Let the voice [of those] who command the ships and and other cohorts ring out. Have the arm-rings and girdles borne before the bier. Display axes and swords decorated with gold and jewels." What the death-bringing one ordered is carried out faster than the words are spoken. The clamour of the weepers is heard, the loud voices of the mourners. The mountains resound, ringing because of the voices of the fake mourners. With bells the bishop summons the people spread out over the whole city. The clergy come, dressed in monastic vestments. So also do the leaders of the city, in order to crown the martyr. The female sex flocks thither, about to be led off into exile. Of one mind, they all go towards the monster placed on the bier. The scholars precede their seniors, bearing candlesticks and crosses. Hasting is carried forward by the pagans, placed alive on the bier; and the Christians meet the pagans at the gate leading out of the city. He is carried by both peoples to the monastery where a grave has been prepared for him. The bishop readies himself to read a mass for his dear son. And the clergy stands in the choir, accustomed to singing for the holy office. The Christians, about to be slaughtered, do not know the trickery of the lethal fraud. The mass is sung and solemnly celebrated. All the Christians share in the mystical sacrifice of Jesus Christ. With these ceremonies of the mass having been suitably completed, and the pagans had congregated slowly, the bishop commands that the body be carried to the grave. The pagans demanded the bier with a great shout, and said that he could not be buried otherwise. The Christians stood dumbstruck by their replies. Then Hasting jumped off the bier, and snatched the gleaming sword from its scabbard. The death-bringing one attacked the bishop as he held the book in his hand. He slays the bishop, having vanquished the count as well, and

also the unarmed clergy standing in the church. The pagans blocked the doors of the church, so that no one could slip away. Then the fury of the pagans slaughters the unarmed Christians.

B2: *William of Jumièges*, *Gesta Normannorum ducum*¹⁶¹

Quem ad sui perniciem a fonte excipiunt episcopus et comes, hincque baiulorum manibus refertur ad nauim, crismate delibutus. Post hoc intempeste noctis medio, loricatus locatur in feretro, innuens ceteris ut suas induerent loricas sub tunicis. Proinde fit intolerabilis luctus per exercitum, Hastingum obisse neophitum; resonat maris littus tanti ducis excessu. Dehinc naui effertur, ad ecclesiam baiulatur. Sacra uestitur antistes indumenta, sacrosanctam pro defuncto mactaturus hostiam; fit commendatio anime, ut corpus scelerum et perditionis in baratro iam sepultum tradatur sepulcre. Sed ecce prosilit de feretro, episcopumque comitemque obtruncat gladio. Dehinc lupina rabie cum suis grassatur in plebe.

The bishop and the count raise him [Hasting] from the baptismal font, to their own downfall, and he, having been anointed with the chrism, is carried back to the ship in the hands of his bearers. After this, in the dead of the night, he is placed in the bier fully armoured, indicating to the others that they should wear their mail under their tunics. Then there arises an unbearable lament among the army, that the recently baptised Hasting had died; the shore of the sea resounds because of the death of such a leader. Then he is taken from the ship and carried to the church. The priest is dressed in sacred vestments, ready to offer the blessed host; the soul is commended, so that the body already buried in the abyss of crimes and sin might be consigned to the tomb. But behold! he rises from the bier and decapitates the bishop and count with his sword. Then the raging wolf and his men riot among the people.

B3: *William of Apulia*, *Gesta Roberti Wiscardi*¹⁶²

Utile figmentum versutus adinvenit, atque
Mandat defunctum quod quemlibet esse suorum
Gens sua testetur. Qui cum, quasi mortuus, esset
Impositus feretro, pannusque obducere cera
Illitus hunc facie iussus latitante fuisset,
Ut Normannorum velare cadavera mos est,
Conduntur feretro sub tergo corporis enses;
Ad monasterii subhumandum limina corpus

¹⁶¹ Van Houts (ed. and trans. 1992–5, i: 24–5).

¹⁶² Mathieu (ed. and trans. 1961: II,337–51).

Fertur, et ignaros fraudis quos fallere vivi
 Non poterant homines, defuncti fictio fallit.
 Dumque videretur simplex modus exequiarum,
 Erigitur subito qui credebantur humandus
 Evaginatīs comitantes ensibus illum
 Invasere loci deceptos arte colonos.

The clever man devises a useful fiction, and commands that his people should assert that a certain man among them is dead; when he has been placed in a bier as though dead and covered with a shroud and smeared with wax covering his face as he had commanded, as it is the custom of the Normans to veil corpses, swords are concealed in the bier under the back of the body. The body is borne to the threshold of the monastery to be buried, and the fiction of the fake dead man tricks the unwitting, whom the living men were unable to deceive; while they observe the simple customs of the last rites, the one whom they thought was to be buried suddenly arises, and his comrades, with unsheathed swords, fall upon the inhabitants of the town who were deceived by his artifice.

B4: *Saxo Grammaticus on Frotho*¹⁶³

ad urbem Paltiscam exercitum contulit. Quam uiribus inuictam ratus bellum fallacia mutauit. Siquidem paucis admodum consciis ignotę opacitatis latebras petiuit extinctumque se, quo minus hosti terroris afferret, uulgo nuntiarī pręcepit. Additę in fidem exequię tumulusque constructus. Sed et milites conscio fraudis moerore simulatum ducis obitum prosequuntur. Qua fama rex urbis Uespasius, perinde ac uictoria potitus, tam languidam et remissam defensionem egit, ut hostibus irrumpendi potestate facta inter lusus ac ocia necaretur.

[...]

Post hęc celeberrimum insulę oppidum Lundoniam petit. Cuius murorum firmitate expugnationis facultatem negante mortis simulatione facta uires ab astutia mutuatus est. Siquidem pręfectus Lundonię Dalemannus, cum falsum de eius obitu nuntium accepisset, receptis in deditionem Danis ducem ex indigenis offert. Quem ut ex magno aceruo legerent, oppidum intrare permisit. Quibus electionis diligentiam simulantibus nocturnis insidiis circumuentus opprimitur.

He took his army to the city of Polotsk. Having learnt that this city had never been conquered by force, he exchanged battle for falsehood. He sought a place of concealment of impenetrable obscurity, with only a few

¹⁶³ Friis-Jensen and Zeeberg (ed. and trans. 2005: II.i,7; II.iii,8); Ellis Davidson and Fisher (trans. 1979–80: 42; 50).

people in the know, and commanded that it be announced to the people that he were dead, so that the enemy would be less fearful. Funeral rites were held as an addition to the tale, and a barrow built. And soldiers knowing of the deception even honoured the simulated death of their leader with mourning. Vespasius, the king of the city, as if already victorious because of this report, put up such a lazy and slack defence that he was killed by his enemies while playing games at leisure, once they achieved the ability to break in.

[...]

After this he attacked the most populous city of the island, London. When the strength of its walls denied him the opportunity of conquest, by means of simulating death, might was obtained by wit. Indeed, the prefect of London, Dalemannus, when he had received the false message about his [Frotho's] death, having received the surrender of the Danes, offered them a native general, and allowed them to enter the town in order that they might choose him from a great crowd. The Danes simulated diligence in this election, but slew Dalemman by means of nocturnal plots.

B5: Msk¹⁶⁴

Pat er nv fyrst þa segir Norþbrikt at leica scal niþr leggja sem opt er monnom titt at hafa er menn sitia vm borgir. en tialld eitt scal gora af goþo pelli fra oðrom tiolldvm stvnd þa a braut. oc veþrvitar scola þar af vpp meþ gylldom stongom. þangat scola ganga .v. menn eþa vi. a hveriom degi til þess tiallz. oc dveliaz þar nacqvara stvnd. oc fara a valtt hrygvári a brot en þangat. oc ef þer hafit mal eþa røþor við borgar menn sem iafnan er siþr til. þa get ec at þeir spyri hvi þer set sva vkatir eþa hvat tiald þat scal it fagra er sett er fra oprom tioldom i brot. þa scola þer segia mic sivkan. oc liggja þar i tialdino. oc þar mon ec vera. oc scolom þannoc lata fara fram viko. oc er sva er comit þa scola þer allz við leita at hryggva andlit yþor oc segia þa andlat mitt. Siþan scola þer biþia þangat leyfis likino i borgina til einhverrar kirkio. oc segit eigi feit scorta scola beþi gvll oc dyrgripi meþ likino. oc vættir mic at þetta myni þeir leyfa. þvi at margir ero fegiarnir. Þa scola þer beiþa at .lx. manna gangi i borgina meþ likino. en ec get at þat vili þeir eigi. þa scola þer beiþa at .xii.

¹⁶⁴ *Msk*: 73–6 (*MskAG*: 141–3). Following the procedure adopted in *MskAG*, I have, where possible, filled in lacunae by with the conjectures of Unger or the alternative readings of other manuscripts as supplied in Finnur's edition (and also included in the text by Unger); these are marked with asterisks, and other lacunae are indicated by full points in the Norse text. I have not differentiated these passages in the translation. Cf. the notes to chapter 12 at *MskAG*: 407. As with the previous story, this tale is repeated in *Fsk*: 232–3 (*FskF*: 186–7) and *Hkr* III: 80–1 (*HkrH*: 585) in a greatly condensed form (about a quarter the length of the *Msk* version); once again, I give the *Msk* reading alone as it is the fullest and earliest.

menn gangi inn. oc segit þat øngan siþ at feri menn gangi með tigin manz lici en .xii. oc þat mono þeir leyfa. er scolot gera kisto at likino oc scal ecki vett ifir. scal breiþa ifir dyrlicet pell. þat er þer hafit bezt til. oc latið þannoc bragþ a yþr í ollo sem ec sia yþr mioc harmdavþi. oc ef þetta ferr nv nacqvæt eptir minni tilscipon. oc leyfi þeir xii. monnom at ganga inn i borgina með likino. þa mon ec fara i kistona. en siþan scola þer bera kistona a avxlom yðr oc ganga vndir .iiii. en .ii. menn scola ganga með merkiom. Þeir Halldorr Snorrason oc Vlfr stallari scola vera i sloppom. en hafa brynior vndir. her-rinn scal alvafnaðr oc þrøngvaz at vtan er ver comom i hliþit borgarinnar. oc eigi scal þeim mioc þurfa at fryia er firir fara. oc siþan i hliþino scola þer fella niþr kistona af avxlom yþr. en ec hetti til þess hve skiotr ec verþ or kistonni. Oc er sett var raþit þetta. gengr herrinn iafnan hia borginni oc litr a. oc þiccir torbreytilig at vinna. Jarl er ifir borg þesi. oc hrosa þeir ser mioc borgarmenn oc biþia at þeir søki at vascliga. allz þeir hafa liþ mikit. qvoþoz oc spurt hafa at þeim varþ ecki raþafatt. en qvoþoz þo etla at seint ynni þeir borgina af smafoglom. þo at þeir beri byrþom spano at. oc qvoþoz við myndo sia slicom broghom. oc leto at þat veri drengilicet at søkio her eptir meira. en hinom .ii. borgom. qvoþvz spvrt hafa at hofþingia þeira varþ slict ecki vm afl. Oc er natta tecr gøra þeir atgongo at borginni. oc standaz eigi eggion borgar manna oc dettiyrþi en vilia vitia hvar vornn þeira er iafnmikil. sem borg er goþ oc ramlig. Þeir hafa við oll brogh. þav er tizca var til i þess hattar bardaga. En þegar er herr þeira com at borgar veggjom. þa scorti þar eigi valsløngvr fyrir oc aðra griotflavg . . . þeir sia þessa borg sva sterca at eigi þotti þeim von at hon yrþi með vapnom sott enda voro *veggir of þyccir við* at briotaz. halda nv aptr til herbvþa. oc styrma ifir hofþingia sinom eptir þvi *sem hann hafde rad* til sett. oc allt ferr nv eptir geto Norþbricz oc etlon. oc þar kømrr er þeir hafa þar vico verit. þa *segia þeir borgar* monnom and-lat hof*dingia* Griccia hersins. oc voro allhryggvir. oc beiddo siþan at þeir scyldo veita leg likino at nocqvorri kirkio i borginni oc qvoþoz *ofra skylldu* miclo fe sem siþr var til fire sal ricra manna. beiddo oc vm licfylgior sem han hafþi firir melt. En þeir er kirkior uarþueit*tu j borgi*nne vildo giarna þiggia gullit þo at vikingar gefi þeim. oc bavþ hverr fram sina kirkio at hofþingiann scyl . . . hvghþvz þeir myndo vpp taca fvllsælo fiar i gvlli eþa oprom dyrgripom. en a þat vrþo þeir sattir vm licfylgio sem. . . gat til at .xii. menn scyldi inn ganga með i borgina. Siþan gengo i moti likino vt i borgarhliþ við crossom oc helgom domom oc voro scryddir. en vikingar i oðro lagi baro kistona tigvliga a avxlom ser. oc var tialdat ifir purpurapellom. en menn þeir er fylgho licino hofðo silki sloppa. oc hotto siþa a hofþi fyr hryghar sacir. en vndir voro hialmar oc brynior. oc er þeir coma i mitt borgarhliþ. þa verþr slys i forinni fella þeir niþr kistona vm þvert borgarhliþit. oc i þvi bili qvaþ vip lvþr ner hliþino. en herrin var aþr allr með vapnom oc albvinn rvnnv þa til borgar oc þrøngþvz i hliþit. Norþbrict hafþi borit kistona þo at hann hefþi hitt sagt. oc hafþi hon tom verit. bra hann þa sverþi oc allir hans menn hliopo vpp i hliþit oc drapo þar marga menn er vapnlavsir voro firir.

Then Norþbrict says: "The first thing is to abandon the games which men are accustomed to play when they besiege a town. A tent should be made

from good material, and placed at a distance from the other tents, and weather-vanes shall be placed there on gilded stakes. Five or six men should go every day to this tent, and stay there for a while, and should leave more upset than on the way there. And if you speak to or exchange words with the townsmen, as is customary, I say that they will ask you why you look so gloomy, or what that tent is that is fair and placed at a distance from the other tents. Then you should say that I am sick, and lie in that tent, and I will in fact be there. And we should let things pass thus for a week, and when a week has passed, you should all wear a very dismal expression and say that I am dead. Then you should ask to be allowed to take the corpse to a certain church in the city, and say that there will be no lack of abundance both of gold and precious stones along with the body. And I expect that they will allow this, because many people are eager for riches. Then you should ask that sixty men might go into the city with the body; but I say that they will not want this. Then you should ask that twelve men might go in, and say that it is not custom that less than twelve men go with a nobleman's body; and they will permit this. You should make a coffin for the body, but there should be no lid on it. You should spread the costliest material that you have, and you should pretend that my death is very greatly lamented by all of you. And if all this goes as I have arranged it, they will also allow twelve men to go into the city with the corpse. I shall go inside the coffin, and four of you should bear the coffin on your shoulders, and two men should carry the banners. These two men, Halldórr Snorrason and Úlfr stallari, should be in loose robes, wearing armour underneath. The army should be fully armed, and thronging outside when we enter through the town gate. It should not be hard to goad on those who go ahead, and once they have passed the gate, they should lower the coffin from their shoulders, and I will take a risk as to how fast I can come out of the coffin." And when this plan was made, the army goes around the town and examines it and thinks it very difficult to conquer. An earl commands this town, and the townsmen boast a lot and ask the besiegers to attack bravely, since they have a great army. They also say that they had heard that they [the Norsemen] were not lacking in wit, but they say that they thought it would take long to conquer the town with small birds, even if the birds were bearing burdens of shavings; they say that they would guard themselves against such tricks, and said that it would be bold to attack here more [directly] than in the other two towns. They say that they had heard that this [such an attack] was not beyond the power of their [the Norsemen's] chieftains. And when night begins to fall, they [the Norsemen] attack the town since they cannot tolerate the taunting and sneers of the townsmen and want to test whether

their defence es really as great as the town is good and strong. They use all the tactics that were customary in this sort of battle. And when their army approached the town walls, there was no lack of catapults and stone-showers. They see that this town is so strong that they did not seem to have any hope of winning it with weapons and the walls were too thick to breach. They return now to the camp and crowd around their chief according to the plan he had devised, and everything went as Norþbrikt had said and intended. When a week has passed, they tell the townsmen that the leader of the Greek army has died, and they were very dismal. And they requested afterwards that they might carry the corpse to the burial-place in a certain church in the city and said that they would offer plenty of money as was the custom for the souls of mighty men. They requested a funeral procession as he had earlier told them to. And those who had the keeping of the churches in the city were eager to receive whatever gold the vikings would give them, and each one offered his church for the chieftain. They thought that they would get a wealth of gold or other treasures. They agreed about the [size of the] funeral procession as [he had] said, that twelve men should go into the city with the body. Then they came out of the town gate with crosses and relics to meet the corpse and were in full regalia. And from the other side, the vikings bore the coffin grandly on their shoulders, and it was covered with costly purple, and the men who followed the corpse were dressed in loose silk robes, and wore broad hats on their heads on account of mourning; but underneath they wore helmets and armour. And when they come to the town gate there is a mishap in the procession; they drop the the coffin across the gateway, and at that moment a trumpet sounded near the gate, and the army was already fully armed and prepared and ran to the town and crowded the gate. Norþbrikt had carried the coffin, though that is not what he had planned, and it had been empty. He swung his sword and all his men ran up to the gate and killed many men who were there unarmed.

C: Burning walnuts

C1: *Gesta Normannorum ducum*¹⁶⁵

Cumque hec a ministris indicata duci fuissent, quod nusquam inuenire ualerent ligna ad cibaria excoquenda, propter urbis illius forum seu mercatum inhibitum, precepit illico ut amigdalorum et nucleorum operimenta

¹⁶⁵ Van Houts (ed. and trans. 1992–5, ii: 82–5).

sufficienter et habundanter in igne ponerentur, ob sua suorumque cibaria decoquenda.

And when these things had been told to the duke by his servants, that they were unable to find any wood to cook their food because the market and shops of the city were forbidden [to them], he said to them that they should cast the shells of almonds and walnuts in sufficient and abundant quantity into the fire in order to cook food for himself and his men.

C2: *Msk on Haraldr Sigurðarson and Sigurðr Jórsalafari*¹⁶⁶

Konungr bannade þa eldeut til ath buaa veizluna og kuad konung eige mega hafa rett sinn fyrir kappe hans og rikdomi. En þo hittizt bratt til þess ath veizlan var buin þott konungr villde eigi [...] og vard ueizlan agæta god. Og undradizt konungr miog ath hann hafde eldeuid feingit so gnogliga þar sem hann lagde bann uid at hann skyllde med ongu mote fa. en Nordbrigt segir honum ath hann hafde þar til skiphræ og suord og valhnetr. [...]

Þa segir Sigurþr konvng at menn hans scylldo ganga a þat stræti í borginni er víþr veri ceyptr. let hann mvndo mikinn þvrfu. Þeir sogþo at hvern dag var morgom hlossom ekit i borgina. oc eigi þvrfu þat at vgga at víþinn mondi scorta. oc nv biosc sva vm at brotto var allr víþinn er hafa þurfti. oc sogþo þeir til Sigurþi konvngi. Hann melti. Vitit nv þa segir hann. ef þer fait valhnøtr. eigi monom ver þeim siþr kvnna ellda en víþinom. Þeir foro oc fengo þetta sva mikit sem þeir villdo hafa.

The [Greek] king forbade firewood for the preparation of the feast and said that he was not able to maintain his rights before his [sc. Haraldr's] ardour and magnificence. But nevertheless, a way was found so that the feast was prepared even though the king did not wish it [...] and the feast was wonderfully good. And the king was amazed greatly that he had obtained firewood in such sufficient quantity even though he had forbidden him to have any at all. And Nordbrigt says to him that he had used ship-wrecks, brushwood and walnuts.

[...]

Then King Sigurþr says that his men should go to that street in the town where wood was sold, he said that they would need a lot of wood. They said that every day many loads were carried into the city, and that there was no need to fear that the wood would run short. And now it came to pass that all the wood that they needed was gone, and they said this to King Sigurþr. He said: "see now," he says, "if you can find walnuts. We will

¹⁶⁶ *Msk*: 65–6; 350–1 (*MskAG*: 137; 324).

not be able to burn them less than wood." They went and got as much as they wanted to have.

D: *Golden horseshoes*

D1: *Gesta Normannorum ducum*¹⁶⁷

Appropinquans autem urbi Constantinopolitane, constituit ut mula, cui insidebat, pro ferramentis pedum, quibus antea uti solita erat, tunc aureis uteretur, neque quisquam suorum colligere presumeret, quando eadem mula ipsa eadem ferramenta aurea suis pedibus excuteret, ut Greci, qui prius Gallos cupidos auri uocare soliti erant, nullam in suis auaritie occasionem penitus inuenire possent.

And as they approached the city of Constantinople, he commanded that the mule on which he rode should be shod with golden shoes instead of the iron shoes that it was earlier accustomed to, and further, that none of his men should dare to pick up the shoes when the mule shook them off its hooves, so that the Greeks, who were accustomed earlier to call the French desirous of gold, should be able to find no avarice in his men whatsoever.

D2: *Msk*¹⁶⁸

*Sva segia menn at Sigvrðr konvngi leti skva hest sinn með gylli að hann reið i borginna ok skyldi sva til haga at vndan skyldi staukva einhverr skorinn a strætino. ok skyldi engi hans manna til lita [...] * þott scvarnir hryti vndan hestonom.

Men say that King Sigurðr had his horse shod with gold before he rode into the town and it was to be arranged thus that one shoe should fall off on the street, and none of his men should pay any attention [...] even though the shoes fell off the horses.

¹⁶⁷ Van Houts (ed. and trans. 1992–5, ii: 82–3).

¹⁶⁸ *Msk*: 348 (*MskAG*: 323); *Fríssbók* (Unger, ed. 1871: 287). There is a leaf missing from the *Msk* manuscript at this point, and following *MskAG*, I cite the lines between asterisks from the version given in *Fríssbók*, a fourteenth-century manuscript of kings' sagas that mainly follows *Hkr*, but in some cases has versions of *Msk*; cf. *MskAG*: 452, n. 13; Andersson and Gade (2000: 8).

E: *The Movements of Earl Tostig before Hastings*E1: *Orderic Vitalis's Historia Ecclesiastica*¹⁶⁹

Tunc Tosticus Goduini comitis filius aduertens Heraldi fratris sui praeualere facinus, et regnum Angliæ uariis grauari oppressionibus ægre tulit, contradixit, et aperte repugnare decreuit. Vnde Heraldus patris consulatum quem Tosticus quia maior natus erat, longo tempore sub Euardo rege iam tenuerat ei uiolenter abstulit, ipsumque exulare compulit. Exul igitur Tosticus Flandriam expetiit [...] Deinde festinus Normanniam adiit [...] Interea Tosticus in Angliam remeandi licentiam a duce accepit eique auxilium suum tam per se quam per omnes amicos suos firmiter spondidit [...] Heraldus enim mare nauium militumque copia munierat, ne quis hostium sine graui conflictu introiret in regnum quod fraudulenter inuaserat. Tosticus itaque magnis undique premebatur angustiis utpote qui nec Angliam per bellum cum paucis contra innumeros inuadere, nec Normanniam propter contrarietatem uentorum poterat repetere [...] donec tandem post plurimos labores ad Heraldum regem Nortwigenarum qui Harafagh cognominatur accessit

Then Tostig, the son of count Godwin, observing that the crime of his brother would prevail, both asserted with displeasure that the kingdom of England would be burdened with various oppressions, and spoke [out against Harold] and decided openly to oppose him. Following this, Harold violently snatched from Tostig his earldom, which he had held for a long time under King Edward, as he was older, and forced Tostig into exile. Thereupon Tostig, an exile, fled to Flanders [...] He then rushed to Normandy [...] In the meantime [while William consults with his noblemen on a course of action] Tostig obtained permission from the Duke [William] to return to England, and promised him faithfully his own help and that of all his friends [...] Harold, however, defended the sea with a multitude of ships and men, lest any enemy enter without major battle into the kingdom that he had wrongfully usurped. Tostig was thus oppressed on all sides by great perils, since he could neither take England in battle with only a few men against many, nor could he return to Normandy because of unfavourable winds [...] finally after much travail he came to Haraldr, king of the Norwegians, who is called Fair-Hair.

¹⁶⁹ Chibnall (ed. and trans. 1968–80, ii: 138–43).

E2: Ágrip¹⁷⁰

[...] þá kœmr maðr af Englandi, Tósti at nafni; hann var jarl ok bróðir Haralds Goðínasonar, þess er þá réð fyr Englandi, ok jafnborinn til lands við Harald ok þó öllu svipðr, ok beiddisk liðveizlu af Haraldi ok hét hönnum hálf Englandi, ef þeir fengi unnit [...]

Then a man called Tostig came from England; he was an earl and Harold Godwinsson's brother, who ruled then in England, and he was of equal birth to Harold but nevertheless deprived of everything, and he asked Haraldr for support in troops and offered him half of England if they should win it.

E3: HARN¹⁷¹

Expeditionem paravit in Angliam hortatu Tosta fratris Haraldi regis Angliæ; promisit namque ei dimidiam partem regni, si fratrem expelleret, quod sibi non minus hereditario jure debebatur. Cumque venisset in Angliam una cum prædicto Tosta, subjecerunt sibi provinciam Northumbrorum.

He prepared a campaign in England at the urging of Tostig, the brother of Harold, king of England, as Tostig promised him half of the kingdom if he were to expel his brother, since he felt that the kingdom was owed no less to him by hereditary right. And when he came to England together with the afore-mentioned Tostig, they subjugated to themselves the province of Northumbria.

E4: Msk¹⁷²

Tosti iarl annarr sonr Goþina þottiz eigi vera verr tilkominn rikiss en Haralldr broþir hans. oc syndiz þat at Tosti villdi vera i kosningi fyrir ollom landz hofþingiom víþ broþor sinn. beiddiz at allir lands hofþingiar oc allr lyþr scylldi þann þeira til konvngs kiosa. er allir villdi helldr hafa oc var þat margra mal at Tosti veri vitrari maðr. oc eigi verr til konvngs fallin. en Haralldr broþir hans. En nv þotti Haralldr þo nerr konvngdominom. en hann hafþi konvngs nafnit oc stolsetningina. oc þegit konvngs vixlo þo at helldr veri hvati at borinn vm þat mal. Haralldr hafþi oc hallimar oc fehirðzlor. oc vill engvm costi lata rikit. oc hne vndir hann allt afl lanzins. oc er konvngfann ahvga broþor sions. þa þrøngvir hann honom þar til. er hann stocc or landi. For hann avstr til Danmercr a fvnd Sveinns Konvngs frenda sins.

¹⁷⁰ *Ágrip*: 39 (Driscoll, ed. and trans. 1995: 57).

¹⁷¹ *HARN*: 56, ll. 7–12 (McDougall and McDougall, trans. 1998: 45, ll. 8–15).

¹⁷² *Msk*: 262 (*MskAG*: 262).

Earl Tostig, the other son of Godwin, felt that he was not less eligible for rule than his brother Harold. And it seemed that Tostig wanted to stand against his brother for election by all the chieftains of the land: he asked that all the chieftains and people of the land should choose that man as their king, whom all would rather have, and it was the opinion of many that Tostig was more wise, and not worse suited to be king than Harold, his brother. But Harold seemed closer to having the kingdom, and he had the title and had been enthroned, and he had received the king's revenues, although in this regard things had been rather hurried. Harold also had the halls and treasures, and does not wish to lose the kingdom at any cost. And he forced under him all the power of the land, and when the king [Harold] found out his brother's intentions, he oppressed him until he fled from the land. He travelled east to Denmark to meet King Sveinn, his relative.¹⁷³

F: The Survivals of Harold Godwinsson and Óláfr Tryggvason

F1: Vita Haroldi¹⁷⁴

Prostrato igitur ac superato in primo congressu a Normannis exercitu Anglorum Rex Haraldus plagis confossus innumeris inter mortuos, et ipse prosternitur. Nec poterant tamen quamlibet multa, quamlibet letalia vulnera vitam funditus viro adimere: quem pietas salvatoris ad vitam et victoriam felicius disposuit reparare. Recedentibus itaque a loco cedis hostilibus castris a mulierculis quas miseratio ad alliganda sauciorum vulnera illuc attraxerat: exanguis jam et vix palpitans pugnator ille pridie potentissimus invenitur. Ab hiis Samaritani erga eum vices implentur, ab hiis in vicinum tugurium, alligatis vulneribus suis deportatur. Inde a duobus ut fertur mediocribus viris quos francalanos sive agricolas vocant agnitus, et callide occultatus ad Wintoniensium deducitur civitatem. Hic biennio latebras in quodam cellario fovens a quadam muliere genere Saracena artis chirurgice peritissima: curatus est, et Altissimi cooperante medicina: ad integerrimam perductus sanitatem.

With the English army having been vanquished and beaten down by the Normans in the very first encounter, even King Harold, struck by count-

¹⁷³ *Msk's* account is followed very closely by *Fsk* and *Hkr*: *Fsk*: 274 (*FskF*: 218); *Hkr* III: 172 (*HkrH* 643). The latter text, like Orderic and other Norman sources, has Tostig going to Flanders from England, and only then—following *Msk*—approaching Sveinn for help in Denmark.

¹⁷⁴ Birch (ed. 1885: 34–5).

less blows, is thrown to the ground among the dead. But although many and lethal, his wounds were not able to deprive the man entirely of life; the love of the saviour arranged to recall him happily to life and victory. As the enemy troops withdraw from the site of the slaughter, that warrior, who was yesterday the most powerful, and was now weak from loss of blood and scarcely still alive, is found by some women whose compassion had drawn them there to bind the wounds of the injured. By these women the role of Samaritans towards him is carried out, he is carried by them, with his wounds bound, to a nearby cottage. From there, it is said that he is recognised by two middling men, whom they call freeholders or farmers, and is carried by them, skillfully concealed, to the city of Winchester. Here, keeping concealed in a certain cellar, he was healed by a certain woman of the Saracen race who was most skilled in the surgical arts, with the cooperation of the medicine of God, and was restored to complete health.

F2: HARN¹⁷⁵

Ibi tunc quidam dicunt regem scapha evasisse et ob salutem animæ suæ exterarum regiones adisse, quidam vero lorica tum in mare coruisse. Quid horum verius sit, nos affirmare non audemus; hoc tantum credere volumus, quod perpetua pace cum Christo fruatur.

Some say that then the king escaped in a skiff and went to foreign lands for the salvation of his soul, others say that he had fallen into the sea in full armour. We do not presume to confirm which of these accounts is true; we would rather believe that he enjoys perpetual peace in Christ.

F3: HN¹⁷⁶

Sed bello finito nec uiuum nec mortuum reperierunt illum, unde nonnulli ipsum lorica tum undis submersum affirmant. Quidam eciam longo interuallo in quodam cenobio se illum uidisse protestati sunt. Sed qualiter per equoris discrimina littoris soliditati aduectus sit (siue proprio natatu, seu scaphe uehiculo, seu famulantibus angelicis spiritibus), seu ibidem mersus, a cunctis, credo, nostris coequiis ignoratur. Quare honestius hoc parum determinatum omittendo quam de re incerta falsa diffiniendo pretereamus.

But after the war was over, they did not find him dead or alive, for which reason many assert that he, in full armour, drowned in the waves. However,

¹⁷⁵ HARN: 24, ll. 5–10 (McDougall and McDougall, trans. 1998: 18).

¹⁷⁶ HN: XVII, 51–4.

some claim to have seen him after a long time in a certain monastery. But I believe that it is unknown to all in our own time how he might have been carried through the dangers of the sea to the safety of the shore, whether by swimming, or conveyed in a skiff, or by the aid of angelic spirits; or whether he drowned there itself. For this reason we pass over this story, more honestly omitting a scarcely settled matter than explaining through falsehoods something that is so uncertain.

F4: Ágrip¹⁷⁷

Sumir menn geta hann á báti braut hafa komizk ok segja, at hann hafi verit sénn síðan í munklífi nökkvuru á Jórsalalandi. En sumir geta, at hann hafi fyrir borð fallit.

Some men say that he escaped in a boat and say that he had been seen since in a certain monastery in the Holy Land. And some say that he fell overboard.

F5: *Oddr Snorrason, Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar on Harold Godwinsson*¹⁷⁸

En um nóttina eptir bardagann, þá kom þorpkarl einn í valinn oc vildi fletta mennina. Ok þat sá einn maðr er var í valnum oc ávítaði hann um þat hit illa verk oc hit svívirðliga. Þorpkarlinn hljóp þá heim ok segir þetta konu sinni, en hon brá við skjótt ok bjó sér vagn ok beitti hest fyrir ok bað hann fara með sér til valsins. Ok er þau kómu þar, þá spyr hon ef nökkvorr sé sá maðr í valnum er henni megi þa svara. Ok þá svaraði maðr:

“Er sá maðr í valnum er þér má svara.”

Hon gekk þá til hans, ok veltu þau frá fótum sér dauðum monnum. Ok er hon sá þenna mann, þá létu þau hann í sleðann. Þau spurðu hann af nafni ok at ætt, en hann vildi hvárki segja. Þau þóttusk þó skilja at hann myndi vera gøfugr maðr, bæði fyrir sakir umbúðar ok yfirbragðs. Þessi maðr var Haraldr Guðínason ok hafði fallit fyrir mœði oc blóðrás, ok mǫrg hafði hann sár ok engi mjök stór, en þat þrængði honum mjök ok angraði er svá þykkt lágu hinir dauðu menninir á honum at fyrir þeim mátti hann eigi hræask. Síðan fluttu þau hann heim í vagninum ok græddu hann.

And during the night following the battle a peasant from the village came to the battlefield and wanted to strip the men. And one man who was in the battlefield saw that and rebuked him on account of that evil and disgraceful deed. The peasant ran home and told this to his wife. And she started out at once and prepared the cart for herself and harnessed the

¹⁷⁷ *Ágrip*: 24 (Driscoll, ed. and trans. 1995: 35).

¹⁷⁸ Ólafur Halldórsson (ed. 2006b: 360–1); this section of the saga is contained only in MS A, and is not translated in Andersson (trans. 2003).

horse in front, and told him to ride with her to the battlefield. And when they came there, she asked if there were any man there in the battlefield who could answer her. And a man answered: "There is such a man in the battlefield who can answer you". She went to him, and they tossed aside the dead men from their feet. And when she saw that man, they placed him in the sled. They asked him about his name and his lineage, but he did not want to say anything. They thought nevertheless that he must be a great man, both because of his equipment and his demeanour. This man was Harold Godwinsson and had fallen because of exhaustion and bleeding, and he had many wounds, though none was very great. And it oppressed and angered him greatly that the dead men lay so densely-packed around him that he could not budge. Then they carried him home in the cart and healed him.

F6: *Oddr Snorrason, Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar on the survival of Óláfr Tryggvason*¹⁷⁹

ok var þat margra manna sōgn at Óláfr konungr hefði steypzk af brynjunni í kafi ok kæmi með sundi ok miklum vaskleik til Vinðaskipsins, ok hefir sú frasōgn lengi síðan fram verit hōfð, sem heyra má í þeira manna orðum er þetta sannat. En þetta er sōgn Hallfrøðar [...]:

[16] Veitat ek hitt, hvárt Heita
hungrdeyfi skal ec leyfa
dynsæðinga dauðan
dýrbliks, eða þó kykvan.

Ok enn kvað hann:

[17] Sagðr var mér, ne meira
muni maðr stríð of bíða
lýðum firrdr ok láði
landvōrðr fyr sjó handan;
væri oss, þótt ærir
elds þeim svikum belldi,
heilalíkn, ef—hauka
hóklífs—jōfurr lifði.

[At this point, MS A has the following remark:] Hér segir svá, at þegar var tvennt frá sagt þeim fundi, hvárt hann myndi fallit hafa eða braut komizk. Ok mōrg qnnur dœmi eru til þess.

[...]

¹⁷⁹ Ólafur Halldórsson (ed. 2006b: 348–50, vv. 16–17; 356–7); Andersson (trans. 2003: 132–3; 135–6).

Ok þat vil ek segja enn, er sumum mǫnnum þykkir ótrúligt, at Óláfr konungr færi ór brynju í kafi ok hann kæmisk í Vinðaskeiðina til Ástriðar ok Dixins, ok hefði þau hann í braut með sér í Vinðland, ok væri sárr með mǫrgum sárum ok eigi stórum, ok léti hon græða hann, ok væri hann þar kenndr af mǫnnum, ok byði margir honum lið sitt, góðir menn, ok at hann tæki þar ríki eða sætti Nóreg með liði. En hann kvazk þat eigi vilja ok sagðisk stýrt hafa þá hrið ríkinu sem Guð unni honum, ok kvað ver mega at Guði hefði eigi í alla staði hugnat hans ríki ok áburðr, en kvazk eigi nenna at leiða þá í háska er áðr hafði hann kristnat ok Guði markaða. Ok þessi er frásögn Ástriðar. En síðan væri hann Guði kunnr, þótt mǫnnum væri hann ókunnigr. Ok þat segja menn at hann sendi menn til Erlings Skjálgssonar ok Ástriðar, at þau vissi sanna hluti um hans hag ok at hann væri í munklífi.¹⁸⁰

And many men say that King Óláfr had cast off his armour when diving into the water, and came to the ships of the Wends by swimming very valiantly. And this story has been told widely since then, as one can hear in the words of those men who have affirmed it. Thus says Hallfrøðr [v. 16]:

I do not know whether I should praise as dead or alive the hunger-suppressor of the seagulls of the din of the shining of Heiti's beast [Heiti = sea-king; his beast = ship; its shining = shields; their din = battle; its seagulls = ravens; the one who suppresses their hunger (namely, by providing them with carrion to feed on) = the warrior/king].

And he spoke another verse [v. 17]:

It was said to me that the land's guardian was carried away from land and people beyond the sea; one cannot suffer more grief. It would be salutary for us if the prince lived, even though the expender of the fire of high-cliff of the hawks [high-cliff of hawks = hand; fire of the hand = gold; expender of gold = jarl, here referring to Jarl Eiríkr Hákonarson, Óláfr's opponent] committed treachery.

[MS A:] Here it is said that there were two accounts told about this event, how he might have fallen or escaped. And there are many other judgements about this.

[...]

And I also want to report that which seems unbelievable to some men, that King Óláfr removed his armour underwater and came to the Wendish ship to Ástriðr and Dixin, and they carried him away with them to Wendland, and he was wounded with many wounds, but none of them was great. And Ástriðr had him healed, and he was recognised by men,

¹⁸⁰ The text goes on to state that Oddr affirms that Óláfr survived and lived a life as a monk (358–9).

and many good men offered him support, if he wished to gain a kingdom or attack Norway with an army. But he refused, and said that he had ruled his kingdom for the time that God had loved him, and said that it could be that God had not approved fully of his power and might, and said that he did not have a mind to endanger those whom he had earlier converted and signed over to God. This is the report of Ástríðr. After this King Óláfr was known to God, although he was unrecognised by men. Men also say that he sent men to Erlingr Skjálgsson and Ástríðr so that they should know the truth about his condition and that was in a monastery.

F7: Fsk¹⁸¹

Svá mikit gerðu menn sér um at vingask í allri umræðu við Óláf konung, at mestr hlutr manna vildi eigi heyra, at hann myndi fallit hafa, nema létu, at hann var í Vinðlandi eða í Suðrriki, ok eru margar frásögur um þat gǫrvar, en hans ástvinir hræddusk, at þat myndi logit vera, ok lýsti Hallfrøðr því vandræðaskáld, sá maðr, er svá mikit hafði unnt konunginum, at menn segja, at eptir fall konungsins fekk hann vanheilsu af harmi, þá er hönnum vannsk til dauðadags. Þetta vitni bar Hallfrøðr:

[116] Veitkat hitt, hvárt Heita
 hungrdeyfi skalk leyfa
 dynsæðinga dauðan
 dýrbliks eða þó kvikvan,
 alls sannliga segja
 —sárr mun gramr at hvóru—
 —hætt es til hans at fréttu—
 hvárt tveggja mér seggir.

[117] Samr vas órr of ævi,
 oddflagðs hinns þat sagði,
 at lofða gramr lifði,
 læstyggis burar Tryggva.
 Vesa kveðr qld ór éli
 Óleif kominn stála,
 —menn geta máli sonnu—
 mjök es verr an svá,—ferri.

Ok enn kvað hann þetta [118]:

Mundut þess, es þegnar
 þróttharðan gram sóttu,
 ferk með lýða líði
 landherðar, skop verða,

¹⁸¹ *Fsk*: 160–2, vv. 116–20 (*FskF*: 128–9).

at mundjökuls myndi
margdýrr koma stýrir
—geta þykkjat mér gotnar
glíkligs—ór her slíkum.

Ok enn kvað hann [119]:

Enn segir auðar kenni
austr ór malma gnaustan
seggr frá sǫrum tyggja
sumr eða brott of kumnum
Nús sannfregit sunnan
siklings ór styr miklum
—kannka margt at manna—
morð—veifanar orði.

Ok enn sagði hann [120]:

Norðmann hykk nenninn
—nús þengill framm genginn,
dýrr hné dróttar stjóri—
dróttin und lok sóttan;
grams dauði brá gæði
góðs ófárar þjóðar.
Allr glepsk friðr af falli
flugstyggs sonar Tryggva.

Men had made so much of speaking of King Olafr in a friendly way in all talk about him that most men did not want to hear that he might have fallen, but said that he was in Wendland or in southern Europe, and many stories have been made about that, but his close friends feared that these were untrue, and Hallfrøðr vandræðaskáld proclaims that—the man who had loved the king so much that men say that after the fall of the king he suffered a sickness from his grief, which remained with him till his dying day. Hallfrøðr bore this witness:

[116] I do not know whether I should praise as dead or alive the hunger-suppressor of the seagulls of the din of the shining of Heiti's beast [Heiti = sea-king; his beast = ship; its shining = shields; their din = battle; its seagulls = ravens; the one who suppresses their hunger (namely, by providing them with carrion to feed on) = the warrior/king], since men say both are true—the prince is wounded in both versions—it is dubious to inquire about this.

[117] It was fitting that the messenger of the spear-giantess [spear-giantess = axe; its messenger = warrior] said that of the righteous son of Tryggvi, that the praised prince lived. People say that Óláfr had come out of the storm of steel [= battle]—men report what is far from a truthful tale—it is much worse than this.

And then he said this [118]:

Fate could not happen this way when the thanes attacked the strong, hard king—I bear the ale of the people of the mountains [people of mountains = giants; their ale = the mead of poetry]¹⁸²—that the very worthy ruler of the hand-icicle [icicle of the hand/arm = silver(-ring); its ruler = king/prince] would be able to come out of such a host [here implying battle]—what the men say seems unlikely to me.

And then he recited [119]:

Many a man tells the knower of wealth [here: the poet, who has been rewarded] of the wounds of the leader, or that he came away to the east from the clash of iron. Now true knowledge of killing of the king has come from the south from the great battle; I do not pay much heed to the wavering words of men.

And then he said [120]:

I believe that the doughty lord of the Northmen is done to death—now the king has departed; the dear leader of the troop has fallen; the death of the good prince has broken the well-being of many people. All peace is confounded by the fall of the steadfast son of Tryggvi.

F8: Hkr¹⁸³

En sú Vinðasnekkjan, er menn Ástríðar vǫru á, røri brot ok aptr undir Vinðland, ok var þat þegar røda margra manna, at Óláfr konungr myndi steypt hafa af sér brynjunni í kafi ok kafat út undan langskipunum, lagzk síðan til Vinðasnekkjunnar ok hefði menn Ástríðar flutt hann til lands. Ok eru þar margar frásagnir um ferðir Óláfs konungs gǫrvar síðan af sumum mönnum, en á þessa leið segir Hallfrøðr:

[v. 166, *Veitkat hitt, hvárt Heita*, follows, equivalent to *Fsk* v. 116]

En hvernug sem þat hefir verit, þá kom Óláfr konungr Tryggvason aldri síðan ríkis í Nóregi, en þó segir Hallfrøðr vandræðaskáld á þessa leið:

¹⁸² According to a narrative preserved in the section of *Snorra Edda* most concerned with explicating the art of skaldic poetry, *Skáldskaparmál* (Faulkes, ed. 1982–98, iii/1: 3–5; Faulkes, trans. 1995, 61–4), poetry originated in a mead that was stolen from the gods by a giant, and recovered for the gods by Óðinn. The story is considerably complex and not really relevant for our purposes; it is related in a manner that is yet to be determined to a part of one of the poems in the so-called *Poetic Edda*, *Hávamál*, which appears to tell something of the same story (Evans, ed. 1986: st. 104–10; 140–1). On the mead of poetry in *Skáldskaparmál*, see further Wanner (2008: 136–9); more generally on the myth, see Abram (2011: 112–15); Clunies Ross (2005: 91–3); Frank (1981); Orchard (1997: 110–11); Simek (1995: 367–9); Sváva Jakobsdóttir (2002).

¹⁸³ *Hkr* I: 367–70, vv. 167–9 (*HkrH*: 241–3).

[v. 167, *Samr vas qrr, of ævi*, follows, essentially the same as *Fsk* v. 117]

Ok en þetta:

[vv. 168–9, *Mundut þess, es þegnar*, and *Enn segir auðar kenni*, follow, and are essentially the same as *Fsk* vv. 118–19].

And the Wendish ship, in which were Ástriðr's men, sailed away to Wendland, and later it was said by many men that King Óláfr stripped off his armour underwater and swam out under the long-ship and came to the Wendish ship and Ástriðr's men sailed it to the land. And many tales about the journey of King Óláfr have been spun afterwards by some men, and Hallfrøðr speaks thus:

[v. 166]

And however it might have been, King Óláfr Tryggvason never came back to rule in Norway, although Hallfrøðr speaks thus:

[v. 167]

and also thus:

[v. 168–9].

CHAPTER FOUR

THE USES OF THE PAST

At the end of her excellent survey on medieval Icelandic historiography, Diana Whaley states that “perhaps the single most important ‘use’ of historical writing in Iceland [...] was to foster national self-definition”.¹ She is able to demonstrate this effectively on the basis of her readings of *Íslendingabók* and *Landnámabók*, but it is symptomatic of scholarship on the use of the past in medieval Iceland, including Whaley’s, that the kings’ sagas do not feature prominently in the authors’ analysis,² despite the fact that many of them were written by Icelanders, and almost all were apparently preserved predominantly in Icelandic manuscripts. This begs the question: what was the place of the Norwegian past in Iceland, and how did this relate to its role in Norway? Writing about Norwegian kings could also have a function of fostering national self-definition in a country on which the policies of those kings impinged heavily; but this is an aspect of the kings’ sagas that has only recently received much detailed attention in the scholarship, and, I shall suggest below, there is still much that needs to be done in understanding the place of the kings’ sagas in the historical consciousness of twelfth- and thirteenth-century Iceland. The function of the Norwegian royal past in Iceland also, of course, relates to the issues dealt with above: where did the saga authors get their information from, and how; to what extent was it different from traditions current in Norway; and to what extent were the authors willing to change or add to what they received precisely because they were not writing about their own past.

A number of scholars have argued that the *Íslendingasögur* are concerned especially with the difference between the Christian present of a stratified society, about to be subjugated by Norway, and the pagan past, which can be admired, but not really emulated.³ The pagan past serves

¹ Whaley (2000: 193).

² See Whaley (2000: 179–82), on the kings’ sagas and Iceland.

³ Among the most important early works on the *Íslendingasögur*: Harris (1986); Lönnroth (1969); cf. more recently Vésteinn Ólason (1998). A broader viewpoint is in Weber (1987), building on many of his earlier papers, of which Weber (1981) is one of the most significant; Weber in particular addressed the issue of typology, and included *Ísl* and *Hkr* in his

a typological function: the ‘noble heathen’ prefigures the good Christian to follow, and while he is admirable in many ways for his disconnection from the flaws of his world, he is nevertheless still firmly in the past, and thus ‘other’.⁴ Thus in the world of the present, the audiences of the sagas are given ancestors to whom they can look back with awe and pride, but also from whom they must distinguish themselves precisely because of the differences in values: the sagas present a means of dealing with the past that accords it a legitimate place, allowing some pride and current political clout to be derived from it, while nevertheless confining it safely in the past.

This theme has also been suggested with regard to *Landnámabók*: William Sayers demonstrates how the past is used to legitimate contemporary social structures within Iceland, and how the large Celtic element in early Icelandic society is suppressed to this end.⁵ He also exposes, however, the concern with royal origins: given that a number of prominent Icelandic families claimed to trace their descent back to the Norwegian royal house, it is perhaps not surprising to see others claiming Irish royal ancestry; the intermediate stages of slavery are passed over silently.⁶ One could postulate, given the justification for the work in the *Þórðarþók*-redaction (that it is supposed to prove that Icelanders are not descended from slaves),⁷ that *Landnámabók* was intended (at least in part) to show the Norwegian overlords that the Icelanders were on par with them.

analysis. He is contradicted by Duke (2001), who prefers to read Ari as being relatively uninfluenced in his attitudes by the historical philosophy of non-native clerical historians. We should note here, with reference to the discussion in the previous chapter, that the typological structuring of narrative is—like the references to Troy and euhemeristic notions in Snorri’s *Edda*—an indicator of influence from Latin, learned traditions; in both cases, it is not necessarily a matter of a direct relation to a particular source text, but rather of an influence on attitudes to the past. A reading *contra* Lönnroth and Weber, arguing against typological influence in *Hkr*, is provided by von See (1999: 310–44).

⁴ On the origins and development of typological thought in western traditions, see, on Scripture and Latin literature, the pioneering works of Erich Auerbach (1938; 1953); on typology in vernacular literature, see the influential studies of Friedrich Ohly (1977a; 1977b). These theories have largely been accepted by literary scholars, but cf. also the more sceptical views of Hoefer (1971), Jentzmik (1973), and Schröder (1977); and with regard to Snorri, von See (1999: 310–44). On the importance of typological thinking for the ‘Icelandic worldview’: Sverrir Jakobsson (2005: 91–8).

⁵ Sayers (1994); on the Celtic element in early Icelandic settlement, see also Jochens (1999: 633–9).

⁶ See also Jakob Benediktsson (1966–9).

⁷ Jakob Benediktsson (ed. 1968: cii; cf. Hermann Pálsson and Edwards, trans. 1972: 6): “En vér þykumsk heldr svara kunna útlendum mǫnnum, þá er þeir bregða oss því, at vér séim komnir af þrælum eða illmennum, ef vér vitum víst vǫrar kynferðir sannar” (“But it

This is an important consideration when we remember the Icelandic concern for Norwegian history—and their reputation abroad for the preservation of this history. If Whaley is right that the preservation of the past served a primary purpose of creating a national identity, we must ask what function(s) the preservation of the past of the coloniser served: to identify oneself with the ancient homeland, or to distinguish oneself from the aggressive neighbour (or both)?⁸ We might also ask, with a view to the suggested functions of the *Íslendingasögur*, in what relation the events and personages of the kings' sagas stand with regard to the period in which these works were composed. In this respect, Weber provides interesting readings of typological interpretations of history in *Hkr*, finding that pre-Christian 'good' figures prefigure later Christian rulers; but his work addresses only the period covered by the text itself, without relating it to *Hkr*'s present.⁹ We may also note in this context Beyschlag's suggestion that when confronted with conflicting sources, the author of *Hkr* might have shaped his account on the basis of what he found in *Sverris saga*, allowing near-contemporary political situations to influence his choice;¹⁰ we might ask whether, in such a case, *Hkr* can be seen as functioning in dialogue with *Sverris saga*, and what sort of prefiguring role its kings fulfil with relation to Sverrir and his successors.

The reaction of the authors (or redactors) of the kings' sagas to their contemporary political context has recently been the subject of some stimulating work, inaugurated by Sverre Bagge's monograph on *Hkr*;¹¹ this was one of the first studies to turn away from source criticism and mining the sagas for 'facts', focusing instead on interpreting the kings' sagas

seems to us better to be able to answer foreign men, when they taunt us, saying that we are descended from slaves or wicked men, if we know for certain our true ancestry").

⁸ The treatment of Sweden is another interesting case: Peter Foote points out that although in the laws, the Swedes were not given rights inferior to those of Norwegians and Danes, most of the kings' sagas present them in a very negative light—in contrast to the Norwegians (2004); these findings are supported by Kári Gíslason's recent examination (2009) of Sweden and Swedes in the *Íslendingasögur*. It is an odd paradox that while *Msk*, a supposedly more 'Icelandic' and less 'Norwegian' text (see below), presents the negative stereotype of Sweden, *Hkr*, apparently wrote a more pro-Norwegian text (and if authored by Snorri, one written by an aristocrat with close links to the Norwegian monarchy), presents a more balanced picture of the Swedes; cf. however Lönnroth (1986) on *Hkr*'s largely negative presentation of the Swedish Ynglings.

⁹ Weber (1987). In this context, cf. Lönnroth (2000), who suggests that typological thinking in historical literature was actually first introduced to Iceland by Oddr Snorrason; see further, on Oddr's use of typology with relation to the two Óláfrs, Zernack (1998).

¹⁰ Beyschlag (1986).

¹¹ Bagge (1991).

with regard to what might be called their ideological content, and how it is to be located in the social and political context in which the sagas were produced. Bagge argues that *Hkr* presents a reasonably coherent political ideology, based on values of honour, justice, and a rather democratic view of kingship in which the monarch is essentially a magnate, *primus inter pares*. On the whole, according to Bagge, *Hkr* is positive about kingship, as long as kings conform more to the model of the peaceful ruler than the warrior king, the two types Bagge believes are exemplified in the subjects of *Hkr*; the work functions almost as a 'kings' mirror', intending to educate rulers and politicians about what good kingship ought to be. In many respects, Bagge's work is deeply problematic, partly because of its often unclear stance on Snorri (for example, Bagge seems unable to decide about the extent to which Snorri is or is not like a modern historian, a confusion arising at least partly from that fact that he is unable to clarify the extent to which either modern or medieval historiography can be considered 'objective' and 'factual');¹² a further problem is that the argumentation is too tied to anachronistic concepts (for example, 'nationhood' and 'identity'; 'history' and 'fiction') drawn from modern theories without clearly enunciated relevance to *Hkr*.¹³ The significance of this monograph lies therefore primarily in the challenge it provided to scholarship of beginning to provide real interpretation with due attention to context.

The gauntlet was indeed taken up rapidly, in a spate of studies by Theodore Andersson, Elizabeth Ashman Rowe, Kevin Wanner, and most prolifically Ármann Jakobsson.¹⁴ In contrast to Bagge's book, the focus of much of this later scholarship is *Msk* (hitherto often neglected from a literary and historical point of view), and the overall interpretative thrust may be summed up in Andersson's remark that there is "a shift of interest from the king's person in the sagas of the two Óláfs [which predated *Msk*] to the king's role in a larger political dynamic", a comment that applies equally well to the other compendia, though as Andersson points out, *Msk*

¹² Bagge (1991: 25–32; 58–9).

¹³ Cf. also the detailed critique provided by von See (1999, 369–72).

¹⁴ Andersson (1993; 1994; 2006: 86–101; 2008: 32–7); see also his critical overview of recent studies in Andersson (2004b); Andersson and Gade (2000); Rowe (1994); Wanner (2006); Ármann Jakobsson (1997; 1998; 2000; 2001a; 2001b; 2002); a number of other publications after 1997, not cited here, are reworked into his 2002 monograph, and listed in its preface.

especially provides us with stories that are parables “not only of two kings but also of two nations”.¹⁵

Andersson places the composition of *Msk* in the context of the trade war that took place between Iceland and Norway in the years 1215–20,¹⁶ and furthermore, suggesting that it was composed at Munkaþverá, he places it in the sphere of the family of Þorvarðr Þorgeirsson, who had been close to King Ingi krókhryggur in the middle years of the twelfth century. Sverrir Sigurðarson claimed descent from Ingi’s brother, who had been killed by Ingi’s men, and according to Andersson, *Msk* thus disapproves of current Norwegian kings, an attitude reflected by its negative view of Norwegian kings who venture abroad, and a more positive view of those who stay at home; these two types of rulers are, according to Andersson, consistently juxtaposed in the text.¹⁷ In contrast, the author of *Hkr* presents a largely positive view of Norwegian kingship, explicable not least by the fact that if he was Snorri Sturluson, he seems to have allied himself against the anti-Norwegian factions in Iceland.¹⁸ In contrast, Rowe suggests that *Hkr*, with its great praise of Óláfr Haraldsson as a saintly king, who is, in her view, contrasted with the rather less saintly kings of Norway in the twelfth century, effectively undermines a case for Norwegian rule over Iceland: *Hkr* substitutes “the spread of the cult of St Óláfr for the spread of Norwegian political hegemony”, and from late eleventh century, Óláfr and god do not intervene in the narrative, and thus the legitimacy of expansion plans of later kinds is undermined.¹⁹

Ármann Jakobsson argues, *contra* Andersson and Bagge, that there is less of a difference in perspective between *Hkr* and the other compendia;²⁰ he believes that both *Hkr* and *Msk* are positive about kingship.²¹ For Ármann, *Msk* is an effort at looking at the institution of kingship—and also the relationship of Icelanders to kingship—from many different angles, without necessarily arriving at a single coherent view. The *Msk*-author tries to formulate an ideal of kingship, and critiques the problems of dual monarchy

¹⁵ Andersson (2006: 91; 95).

¹⁶ For the historical background, see Jón Jóhannesson (1974: 239–43).

¹⁷ Andersson (1994); similarly Andersson (1993); Andersson and Gade (2000: 69–71).

¹⁸ Andersson (1994); similarly also Bagge (1991); Lönnroth (1976); Wanner (2006); *contra* Sawyer and Sawyer (1992).

¹⁹ Rowe (1994: 168).

²⁰ Ármann Jakobsson (1997: 280–6).

²¹ Ármann Jakobsson (1997: 142–3; 2002).

and individual kings, rather than the institution of kingship itself.²² This is in contrast to Marianne Kalinke's earlier study, in which she argued that the author does not critique the problem of dual monarchy, but rather that he presents an image of ideal kingship, with each of the two kings presenting one half of the ideal.²³

Ármann's work, though often presenting illuminating interpretations of individual passages, is somewhat marred by an excessive reliance on unclear theoretical concepts (for example, regarding individuality, and even kingship) that are to my mind not easily derived from the texts themselves, and therefore of somewhat uncertain relevance and applicability. And while I am obviously sympathetic to readings of these sagas that place them within a broader European context, I am not so sure how much the 'courtly' aspects of *Msk* that Ármann perceives can be related to European chivalric romance traditions.²⁴ To be sure, *Msk* is more 'courtly' than other kings' sagas in that the court is the subject of much of the narrative matter (albeit almost always from the perspective of the Icelandic outsider: most of the discussion of the court occurs in the *þættir*); but the quality of this courtliness seems to me rather different from the kind of updating to contemporary cultural norms that takes place in, for example, the Middle High German epics such as the *Nibelungenlied*,²⁵ where the 'archaic' material is placed within the chivalric context of the contemporary court. The nature of courtly society is somewhat different in the kings' sagas, less obviously chivalric than that presented in the romance traditions, even in Norse.²⁶ Furthermore, few scholars would date the beginnings of the reception of French or Anglo-Norman chivalric culture in Norway before c.1220, whereas the current consensus appears to be that *Msk* was already composed by then; if one accepts the early dating (which Ármann seems to),²⁷ it is difficult to argue for influence from European-derived chivalric models as presented in literature. Moreover, Ármann's general acceptance of models proposed by such scholars as Stephen Jaeger with regard to the

²² Ármann Jakobsson (1997: 272–8; 1998; 2002, *passim*); cf. Andersson and Gade (2000b: 65; 69–72; 77–83).

²³ Kalinke (1984).

²⁴ Cf. Ármann Jakobsson (1997: 273; 2002: 110–21; 135–6; 167–9).

²⁵ Bartsch, de Boor and Wisniewski (eds 1988); Edwards (trans. 2010).

²⁶ For introductions to chivalric romance in Norse from differing perspectives: Barnes (1987; 1989; 2000); Kalinke (1985; 1996). A thorough study of the Arthurian traditions is in Kalinke (1981). For recent, brief surveys: Glauser (2005); Sverrir Tómasson (2006: 139–45). The principal texts are edited and translated in Kalinke (ed. 1999).

²⁷ Ármann Jakobsson (2002: 54).

origins and effects of courtliness needs to be tempered by some scepticism with regard to the applicability of these models even in the contexts of Germany and France, the regions Jaeger is primarily concerned with: historians and literary scholars (and differing schools among the latter) of medieval Germany, for example, have divergent opinions with regard to the nature of courtly culture and the relation between ideal and reality, and it is inadvisable, in my opinion, to apply models of courtly culture in France or Germany to Scandinavia without further critical reflection.²⁸

However, courtliness is not simply a matter of aesthetics: the promotion of chivalric romances in thirteenth-century Norway went hand in hand with a new (in Norway) conception of kingship, its legitimisation by

²⁸ There is a vast literature on the wider European context of twelfth- and thirteenth-century courtly culture, of which some of the most influential works (all focusing to a large extent on France) include Bumke (1986, esp. 34–81; 381–450), Duby (1977; 1982), and Jaeger (1985; 2002). In greater or lesser degree, all these works are plagued by the problem of determining the relationship between the ideals enunciated in the romances and other literary works, and the reality, insofar as we can access the latter from documentary sources and in some cases contemporary historiographic narratives. Specifically on the Norman court, and its culture and ideology in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, see Aurell (2007: 23–166), which is suitably circumspect. For some examples of a more sceptical historical scholarship that examines the political functions of courtly literature and is cautious about seeing in it a reflection of real norms and actions, cf. e.g. Fleckenstein (1990): an examination of the social/historical background of chivalric culture; Johanek (1987): a detailed study of the reception of the Arthurian legends in historical/literary works in Anglo-Norman England, which concludes that Arthur was used as a tool for political propaganda to promote a notion of a strong king and a centralised monarchy; Schreiner (1986): a particularly useful study of the actual conditions of courtly life, its criticism by elements of the clergy, and its relation to Christian ideals of aristocratic life; Szabó (1990): on criticism of courtliness, primarily by clergy; see also Cheyette (2001) for a fascinating study of the realities of one court (Narbonne), and a sober appreciation of the power of poets' lyricism in real life. It is interesting to note that the irony and criticism of the ideals of courtliness evident in Chrétien de Troyes seem not to be received either in the Norse reworkings of his texts (thus Barnes (1984; 1987; 1989) and Kramarz-Bein (1999)), or in Anglo-Norman England (Johanek; he studies primarily the Latin texts); this is quite different from the reception in Germany in the works of, for example, Gottfried von Straßburg and Wolfram von Eschenbach, but even in their predecessor, Hartmann von Aue: cf. e.g. Green (1979) (note that Green finds irony and some amount of critique even in Middle English works). On the reality and European-inspired ideology of Norwegian kingship and chivalric/courtly culture in the thirteenth century with particular reference to *Konungs skuggsjá* (the 'King's Mirror': Holm-Olsen, ed. 1945; Larson, trans. 1917), cf. Bagge (1987), and especially Kramarz-Bein (1994); and with reference to *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar*: Bagge (1996); Orning (2008). Reynolds (1994) is now the essential, if highly controversial, point of reference on the realities of 'feudal' aristocratic relations in England and continental Europe; for critical reactions, see Cheyette (1996); Hyams (1997); Reuter (1996); and White (1997); and cf. the reflections on the relationships between the legal, economic and ritual aspects of 'feudal' culture in Hyams (2002).

the church, and its relationship to the aristocracy.²⁹ This was derived not from the traditional, rather loose forms of royal dominance in Scandinavia, but from a more centralised, authoritative form of kingship that claimed divine legitimacy, exemplified particularly in the Anglo-Norman court of England. Ármann's thesis is thus a helpful way of understanding the 'courtliness' of *Msk* as a response to this trend: the text acknowledges the Norman influence, but reasserts a model of king-magnate relations that continues to stress the relative independence of the Icelandic aristocracy.³⁰ In other words, there need not be a direct knowledge either of courtly romance in the Norman or Anglo-Norman world, or its influence in the Norwegian court, in order to suggest that *Msk* was, at least in part, a reaction to ideas of kingship and the king's relationship to aristocrats that derived more from recent European trends than entrenched traditions in Scandinavia; some of these ideas might well have been accessible to the *Msk*-author from his reading of recent non-native historiography, and would not need to depend on the reception of chivalric romance in Norway.³¹ It must be acknowledged, however, that is not easy to pin down the attitude towards Norwegian kingship in the compendia, especially in

²⁹ On the political import of the chivalric ideals of the romances in Scandinavia, see Barnes (2007), and the recent summary of earlier work in Wanner (2008: 84–5); of the major older scholarship, see Barnes (1984). For syntheses of scholarly approaches to the ideological aspects of the romances, cf. Barnes (1987; 1989). Barnes's position is supported by Kramarz-Bein (1999, with extensive further references), with both scholars arguing that, for example, *Parcevals saga* (Wolf and Maclean, eds and trans. 1999) mirrors in many ways the ideals enunciated in *Konungs skuggsjá* and the late thirteenth-century *Hirðskrá*, a legal codex compiled under Hákon Hákonarson's successor (Keyser and Munch, eds 1848; Meissner, trans. 1938). Note, however, that some prominent scholars have contradicted this interpretation, suggesting rather that the purpose of the romances was entertainment, without any didactic and thus strongly ideological intent: Kalinke (1981; 1985); Weber (1986).

³⁰ See, in this context, Ármann's interpretations of the *þættir*, specifically, as reflecting an Icelandic version of courtly culture (2002: 241–9).

³¹ Note also that the concept of 'courtliness' was clearly known in Iceland well before the translations of the romances (Torfi Tulinius 2002: 55–6): Abbot Nikulás Bergsson, in his *Leiðarvísir* (c.1150), an itinerary of holy places in Europe on the pilgrimage route to Rome and Jerusalem (as well as some places of interest solely because of their mention in Germanic heroic tradition), knows of the concept, and believes that Northerners need to learn it. Nikulás tells his readers that "Aa Saxlandi er þíð kurteisuzt ok nema þar Nordmenn mart eptir ath breyta" (Simek, ed. and trans. 1990: ll. 7–8: "In Saxony the people are the most courtly, and the Northmen find much there to imitate"). Nikulás appears to assume that his audience would know what is meant by courtliness (though one could debate as to whether his attitude regarding its importance was broadly shared in Iceland), which suggests that such ideals were known in the north well before the translations of romances started at the court of Hákon Hákonarson. For commentary on this text, cf. Simek (1990: 264–80); Waßenhoven (2006: 73–85).

Msk: we may safely say that while not necessarily anti-Norwegian, or even anti-royal, the author of *Msk* is pro-Icelandic—at least insofar as he gives Icelanders a very prominent and positive role in his work. *Hkr*, on the other hand, is apparently much more neutral, and seems to have a largely positive view of kingship. We should note, though, that this attitude towards Norwegian kings is in itself a factor that undermines ‘objectivity’ if seen from an Icelandic point of view: if we accept that *Hkr* was written by Snorri Sturluson, we should remember that Snorri was politically implicated in many dealings with the Norwegian kings himself, which brought him into conflict with fellow-magnates in Iceland, and almost certainly influenced how he coloured his narrative.

While Ármann’s more recent book (2002) is a stimulating and important work—and so far the only book-length study devoted to interpreting *Msk*—his first monograph (1997) is perhaps more relevant for the broader questions raised in the present study, and is possibly the most important recent work of scholarship on the kings’ sagas. In it, Ármann examines the complete corpus (including *Sverris saga* and *Knýtlinga saga*), and finds in it a largely unified image of kings and kingship. The sagas are—thus Ármann—expressions of an Icelandic interest in the notion of kingship, and specifically good kingship, which interest is in itself nourished by a self-awareness both of Iceland’s uniquely king-less state, and its potential weakness with respect to Norwegian kingship.³² The sagas present varied images of different types of kings, circling around the notion of what an idealised good king is supposed to be; in all of them, Ármann finds, there are certain recurring ideals of kingship, which are shared with other European traditions of historiography. These include the responsibilities of kings to maintain peace and provide justice, and their use of genealogy to legitimate their rule, but also such factors as the outward nobility of appearance that is deemed characteristic of kings.

There is much to be said for Ármann’s approach, and to be sure there are many similarities across the sagas, although I am somewhat uncertain about the extent to which the more or less abstract notions of idealised kingship he operates with may truly be derived from the texts. It seems to me that (with the possible and partial exception of *Msk*) while there might well be perspectives expressed on the individual kings, and even on

³² Iceland’s unique political situation might well have been the reason for the exceptional interest in historical works, and, as Stefanie Würth has suggested (1998: 13–14), might have motivated the early translation of *Rómverja saga*, a text dealing with what might have been perceived to be a similar—because king-less—society.

the nature of Norwegian kingship, the views emerging from the compendia as coherent wholes (the authorial perspective, if one may use such a term) are indeed more grounded in the narratives of individual lives, and have perhaps less of an abstract perspective on kingship as an absolute, than Ármann would suggest.

Ármann's suggestion that concepts of kingship evident in the sagas were from those to be found in continental and English historiography is well-taken; it is certainly true that many of the values ascribed to good kings, and many of the evils of bad kings, are to be found in histories from across Europe (and indeed elsewhere in the world too). Precisely this universal quality, however, means that in some respects Ármann's work is stuck within somewhat vague broad generalisations: certainly, the kings' sagas share much in common with European traditions of historiography and concepts of kingship, but more detailed comparisons of specific issues in individual texts would be extremely useful as a means of grounding this broad characterisation in something concrete, and also in bringing out particular affinities between texts or corpora of texts or schools of thought, as well as highlighting whatever is actually different about Icelandic histories of non-Icelandic kings. After all, while one could argue that there is a common tradition of historical writing in Europe c.1200, there are nevertheless some traits that distinguish the traditions of different regions of Europe that are conditioned by specific political and intellectual backgrounds (Anglo-Norman royal histories are, for example, more focused on strong kings and their personalities, propagating a notion of a centralised kingship of office, whereas German histories tend to devote considerable attention to dealings with intractable regional magnates and relations with the papacy, to both of which the legitimacy of imperial rule is invariably related).

Ármann's suggestion that Icelanders had a hankering for a king is not entirely convincing as an explanation for their manifest fascination with kings and kingship,³³ though one cannot but agree with Ármann that such a fascination (but perhaps not exclusively that: see below) lay behind the production of the kings' sagas. It is also probably true that a greater interest in kings in the first half of the thirteenth century was related to the increasing strife among the various factions of the Icelandic aristocracy

³³ Ármann Jakobsson (1997: 299–303).

in this period.³⁴ It could equally well be argued that these works of reflection on kingship—as Ármann cogently portrays them to be—were produced more out of fear of the encroachment of Icelandic freedoms by this institution: Andersson suggested in response to Ármann that Icelanders “may have been of two minds about their relationship to the Norwegian kings from the very outset”.³⁵ The Norwegian kings were not uninvolved in political strife within Iceland, and were certainly not neutral; and their dealings with Icelanders such as Snorri Sturluson certainly did not help calm the conflicts, and may even have exacerbated them. Andersson suggests further that when seen from the perspective of the evolution of literary genres in Iceland, the kings’ sagas could be viewed as tentative but not very enthusiastic considerations of kingship; these were followed by sagas about other recalcitrant provincials in the Orkneys and Faroe islands; and finally, overlapping somewhat with the kings’ sagas, the early *Íslendingasögur* about skalds were written, which often thematise problematic relations between skalds and kings, and moreover deal significantly with the colonisation—and thus the beginnings of independence—of Iceland.³⁶ There is thus a progression that maps onto the increasing encroachment on Iceland’s independence by the Norwegian monarchy. Andersson’s chronology (repeated more cogently in his 2006 monograph) is, of course, debatable, but his views on the function of the kings’ sagas are nevertheless a valuable counterpoint to those of Ármann. Both, however, focus perhaps too much on the Icelandic context, without taking into account the potential Norwegian audience and the influence this might have had on the production of kings’ sagas: the existence of such an audience could have been a factor leading to the development of the sagas as a means of maintaining some sort of independence by creating and marketing a unique cultural good, as I suggest further below. These caveats notwithstanding, Ármann’s work is an important step in giving us some answers as to what the kings’ sagas actually say about their subjects, and why they were written, and presents us with the most significant and thorough interpretative treatment of the kings’ sagas to date—indeed, the only monograph that attempts interpretation of the whole corpus.

³⁴ On the historical background to the ‘civil war’ and the consequent dissolution of the Icelandic commonwealth, see Jón Jóhannesson (1974: 226–87), and most recently, Gunnar Karlsson (2004: 334–65), Jón Viðar Sigurdsson (2007), and Sverrir Jakobsson (2009: 163–70).

³⁵ Andersson (1999: 926).

³⁶ Andersson (1999).

There is a particular stress, in all the recent studies cited above, on contextualising the sagas within the contemporary political situation, and reading them as reactions to the current relations with Norway. Despite differences in interpretation, the view that emerges is that the Icelandic compendia do not simply present Norwegian history: they deal with the fact of Iceland's independence being potentially, and increasingly, threatened by Norway, by asserting, albeit in different ways, some sense of Icelandic autonomy in relation to Norwegian kings of the past. While our sources appear to stress the links between Iceland and Norway—especially the early Norwegian aristocracy—they also emphasise the difference of the Icelanders. This perspective is lent support by the often complementary conclusions of Patricia Pires Boulhosa's studies of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century manuscripts of *Íslendingasögur* and legal texts:³⁷ Boulhosa finds that in general, the evidence available shows that the relations between the Icelanders and the kings of Norway “were the subject of negotiations, rather than simple opposition or approval”,³⁸ and the differing perspectives of these negotiations are expressed in a wide variety of narrative and other sources.

The trend of reading the kings' sagas in a more interpretative manner—as opposed to the older concern with source criticism alone—is greatly to be welcomed, and the works cited above provide much that is insightful with regard to the sagas. I wish now to turn, however, to somewhat more general issues regarding the composition of Norwegian history in Iceland, and the question of the function of the past within the context of the broader sense of historical consciousness in Iceland around 1200—issues that have less prominent a role even in the recent studies of these texts. To begin with, why is it that the compendia stop before the reign of Sverrir Sigurðarson (from whom the current ruler, Hákon Hákonarson, claimed descent)? Theodoricus states explicitly why he does not wish to continue his work: the times to come were too troubled to be worth relating.³⁹ The period after Sigurðr Jórslafari's death, when Theodoricus stops his account, was full of conflict, which continued into Theodoricus's own time in the early years of Sverrir's rule; any depiction of those years would therefore run the risk of offending one of the various factions still involved in the ongoing clashes, so Theodoricus's reticence is understandable. But

³⁷ Boulhosa (2005).

³⁸ Boulhosa (2005: 209).

³⁹ *HARN*: 67, ll. 6–13 (McDougall and McDougall, trans. 1998: 53, ll. 11–18); the text is cited above, chapter one, n. 38.

if we accept that *Msk* was written c.1220, after Sverrir's death, and after the accession of Hákon Hákonarson, it could well have continued on to treat Sverrir; surely the author, with his talent for locating interesting source material, could have found something about Sverrir that would have furthered his position (whether *pro* or *contra* Norwegian kingship)—in the relative safety of a still-independent Iceland? If Snorri Sturluson, who attempted to cultivate links with Hákon, Sverrir's grandson, wrote *Hkr*, why does he write about Magnús Erlingsson, overthrown by Sverrir, but not about Sverrir himself or his successors—especially if his views were very much in sympathy with those of Sverrir, as has recently been argued?⁴⁰ The argument that *Sverris saga* existed and thus made further narrative about him redundant is not compelling: the author of *Hkr* manifestly knew *Msk* and *Fsk*, and almost certainly also some of the works on Óláfr Tryggvason and Óláfr Haraldsson; this did not stop him from writing his own version of events. Furthermore, *Ágrip* ends in 1136, and Theodoricus in 1130; thus the normal rationale for the composition of *Msk*, that it aimed to fill the lacuna between 1030 (death of Óláfr Haraldsson) and 1177 (accession of Sverrir), is not really convincing. The motivation for the compendia was clearly not the desire to fill a gap in information: their composition was more likely fuelled by a wish to deal with the past, and the past of at least a full generation ago, rather than the present; and to do so in a way different from prior works covering the same periods. What function did this past serve, and for whom—Icelanders, or Norwegians, or both? And where did the third—equally redundant, one should add—compendium, *Fsk*, fit into the picture? Whether Norwegian or Icelandic, *Fsk* has, in its scope and form at least, far more in common with *Msk* and *Hkr* than with *HARN* or *HN*; and its author seems to have known *Msk*, just as *Hkr*'s author seems to have known *Fsk*. Presumably this text too has its own perspective to offer, and perhaps the next kings' saga monograph should be devoted to *Fsk*—now that *Hkr* and *Msk* have received their own book-length interpretations (though these two monographs are certainly not the last word on *Msk* and *Hkr*; there is much yet to be done even for these two texts). One fact about *Fsk* that should be stressed again is its inclusion of an especially large amount of skaldic verse (relatively unmediated by prose exegesis; its status as a repository of many otherwise

⁴⁰ Thus Wanner (2006: 21), who finds that Snorri reflects Sverrir's ideology more than that of the contemporary court of Hákon; in contrast, von See (1999: 366–7) argues that not just Hákon, but even Sverrir tried to create a new, bureaucratised monarchy, which contradicted the ideals put forth in *Hkr*.

unattested stanzas is important, and needs to be explained with regard to its position in Norwegian and Icelandic cultural history.

Perhaps the motivation for writing the kings' sagas was also a different conception of how history ought to be written: all three compendia seem to follow what might be a specifically 'Icelandic' (even if partly foreign-derived) manner of compiling history, with extensive use of native verse as authentication for the narrative. This was not done in the Norwegian synoptics or in *Sverris saga*, so it could be argued that the authors of the compendia make an effort to distinguish their works from the latter, in their very form and approach to sources—and perhaps thus even in their concept of history. Gade suggests that the increase in the use of poetry might have had the function of stressing Icelandic uniqueness (this would not explain *Fsk*, if the latter is a Norwegian work), but more interestingly also speculates that poetry about past Norwegian kings might have been included to cultivate the sympathy of the current Norwegian king.⁴¹ This might lead us to question, from another angle, the protestations of honesty on the part of the *Hkr*-author: if we accept that this text was written by Snorri Sturluson, and that he included the verse in order to show off his knowledge of ancient poems about Norway, he might (like the skalds he quotes?) have been prone to embellishment to the detriment of fact, in order to present a view of Norwegian royal history that his patrons, Jarl Skúli Bárðarson and King Hákon Hákonarson, would have liked, even if he might have had access to sources that could have presented a different perspective (for example, *Msk*).

In this context, and returning to the question of the value of the Norwegian past for medieval Icelanders, Wanner's 2008 study of Snorri's *Edda* provides some illuminating conclusions (see also the discussion above in chapter two at nn. 22–33; 93–4). Wanner's arguments are, for the most part, compelling with regard to *Snorra Edda*. But beyond stressing the importance of skaldic verse—a traditional Scandinavian/Icelandic cultural product—Snorri also, according to Wanner, makes an effort to draw the traditional northern art form into the ambit of a more European cultural sphere, both by giving his work the veneer of a Latin-derived *ars grammatica*, and by including a Trojan origin myth about Scandinavian peoples.⁴² In the context of the present study, however, and given the links discussed above between the kings' sagas and Norman historiographic

⁴¹ Gade (2000b: 70; 76).

⁴² Such a reading of Snorri is provided already in Dronke and Dronke (1977).

traditions, some parallels between *Snorra Edda* and the compendia (not just *Hkr*) are highly illuminating. These works, after all, not only use skaldic verse—praise poems about the ancestors of the current king of Norway, and the subject of exegesis in *Snorra Edda*—but also narrate the history of Norway. *Hkr* and *Msk* at least seem assuredly composed by Icelanders; the form of the compendia itself (serial biography with extensive citation of verse sources) seems to be a peculiarly Icelandic invention, at least in the context of literary production in Scandinavia. Perhaps one might suggest that the very reason the compendia were composed was because of the perceived loss of status of skaldic verse—the traditional form of Icelandic cultural capital—as well as an understanding that the Norwegian court was now increasingly oriented towards non-Scandinavian, not least Norman, models of cultural production. We have seen that the compendia could very well be viewed as ‘Gesta regum’ of the sort produced at or for the very same courts in England and France where the chivalric romances, expressions of a new form of courtly culture rapidly adopted by Hákon Hakonarson, were first received. We should remember also that in *Snorra Edda* the Norwegian kings are given a lineage stretching back to Troy; this mirrors the Trojan origins ascribed to the Franks and the British (among others).⁴³ (In *Hkr*, as Rowe has pointed out, there is no explicit reference to Troy: Scandinavian peoples come from Asia, not Troy.)⁴⁴

The compendia are perhaps an effort to create a new form of cultural capital for Icelanders to export, which incorporates, to be sure, their old marketable good, skaldic verse, but within a form that is more akin to non-native models, and thus perhaps more appealing to a king no longer interested solely in asserting his status within a Scandinavian context (the only one in which the possession of skalds at court would convey any prestige), but rather looking to France and a broader European sphere of culture.⁴⁵ It must be admitted that traditional interpretations of *Msk* as anti-royal (or even anti-Norwegian) might not fit well with this reading,

⁴³ Faulkes (ed. 1982–98, i: 4–6); Faulkes (trans. 1995: 3–5).

⁴⁴ *Hkr* I: 9–25 (*HkrH*: 6–14); Rowe (1994: 160–3).

⁴⁵ It is perhaps also possible that the increase in the amount of verse preserved in the compendia and later sagas—including *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar*—over what is contained in *Sverris saga*, has to do with an increasing concern with the devaluation at the Norwegian court of this traditional Icelandic cultural export; perhaps earlier there was no perceived need to promote skaldic verse in a royal biography because it was not felt to be under threat (recall that Sverrir was, according to *Skáldatal*, patron to more skalds than any other king save Haraldr Sigurðarson; see above, chapter two, n. 153), whereas the later sagas, while adopting a form that intended to appeal to changing tastes, also promoted skaldic verse as something that ought to retain interest for the Norwegian kings.

but Ármann Jakobsson's suggestion that this text is not actually anti-Norwegian or anti-royal would. As suggested above, perhaps *Msk* could be read at least partly as a reaction to concepts of kingship and 'feudal' relations that were later to be enunciated in the Norse romances; like *Hkr*, therefore, it might be a means of asserting the importance of specifically Icelandic forms of cultural capital, and thus also of the kinds of freedom Icelanders had hitherto enjoyed (or are portrayed as having enjoyed) in their relationship with the Norwegian court.⁴⁶ Furthermore, *Fsk* could certainly be read as a text promoting skaldic verse (it includes a large number of stanzas not in *Hkr* or *Msk*); even if not Icelandic, it is more than possible that there were traditional elements among the Norwegian aristocracy—recall the high incidence of Norwegian aristocratic poets noted by Margaret Clunies Ross⁴⁷—who might have preferred to promote a form of historiography like the compendium of kings' sagas that acknowledges the influence of foreign models, while nevertheless asserting the value of traditional cultural practices and retaining a central place for skaldic verse. As Wanner has suggested, Jarl Skúli seems to have been considerably more knowledgeable and receptive to Snorri's verse than was Hákon, and might also have been more receptive to a form of historical narrative less focused on promoting a new form of courtly ideology centred around a divinely legitimated king;⁴⁸ after all, the more the authority of the king increased, the less important the magnates became.

These issues relate, once again, to the contemporary political context within which the sagas were written; another equally intriguing question concerns the nature of Icelandic commemoration of the period from c.1050 to c.1130. As noted above, the *Íslendingasögur* stop before this, and *Sturlunga saga* starts afterwards. In terms of purely secular history, this gap is filled only by the histories of the Norwegian kings, which do not, interestingly, contain much information on Iceland (or Icelanders) for much of this period. What is provided about the Icelanders is in the *þættir*, which tend to present an image of the independent-minded Icelandic

⁴⁶ von See (1999: 358–69) presents a strong case that *Hkr* too is an argument for the preservation of an older form of state in which the king had relatively little centralised power, and local magnates actually exercised rule over most regions, and is thus against the introduction of a "form of state based on the notion of office and thus corresponding to the international standard" (358).

⁴⁷ Clunies Ross (2009b).

⁴⁸ Wanner (2008). It is odd that Wanner ignores the possibility that Snorri composed or compiled *Hkr* in this context, stating that the new cultural product of the kings' saga was something Snorri was not very interested in (2008: 145).

outwitting the overbearing Norwegian and are almost all left out by *Hkr*, being available primarily in *Msk* among the compendia;⁴⁹ thus the gap in history is filled with the Norwegian past, and when Icelanders figure in this narrative, it seems to be largely as men sometimes oppressed by, but normally nevertheless superior to the Norwegians, and in Norway, not in Iceland (we should note that the bulk of the *þættir* fall within the combined saga of Haraldr Sigurðarson and Magnús Ólafsson, and thus deal with a relatively early period).⁵⁰ *Hkr* is obviously not interested in showing Norwegian kings outwitted by Icelanders: for its author, it seems, the good Icelander is the one most loyal to the king, and other stories of Icelanders are omitted.⁵¹ But it is not only the *þættir* that deal with Icelandic history of this period: the late twelfth century also saw the composition of the *Biskupa sögur*, biographies of the Icelandic bishops of this period and later, of which the text that is possibly the first, *Hungrvaka*, is a serial biography (though because of its brevity more comparable to *Ágrip* than the compendia), and also includes one verse.⁵² These sagas are in fact the first to have individual Icelanders as the primary characters; no earlier written biographies of Icelanders are known.⁵³ The form of *Hungrvaka* is not the only thing, perhaps, that should draw to it the attention of kings' sagas scholars: Adam of Bremen had stated, in the late eleventh century,

⁴⁹ The fundamental surveys of the *þættir* remain those of Joseph Harris (1972; 1976), and more recently Würth (1991) on the *þættir* of *Flateyjarbók* (not all of which are in *Msk*). See also Ármann Jakobsson (1998; 2001a; 2001b; 2002: 61–108 (summarising the ideas of the earlier articles)) for a contrasting reading with regard to the *þættir* of *Msk*; Ármann argues, *contra* Harris, that the *þættir* of *Msk* are integral to the work as a whole, and furthermore that they are not just about Icelanders, but equally about Norwegian kings and the relations between the kings and the Icelanders.

⁵⁰ Clunies Ross (1999) provides an alternative reading: for her, the Norwegian is the only one who can provide the necessary guidance that can bring out the innate genius of the Icelandic skald. Her interpretation, however, is based on a late text, from the period after Iceland came under Norwegian dominion.

⁵¹ Andersson (1994: 60–1).

⁵² On the *Biskupa sögur*: Cormack (1993; 2000: 306–12; 2005: 27–32); Jørgensen (1982); Paul (1979); Sverrir Tómasson (2006: 165–9). The texts are edited in the Íslenzk fornrit series, vols 15–17 (1998–2003). More generally on the Icelandic bishops and the saga accounts of them: Foote (1984a); Jón Jóhannesson (1974: 144–56; 179–82; 190–214). Although *Hungrvaka* is a serial biography, it should be noted that the *Biskupa sögur* are, unlike the kings' sagas, generally not prosimetra; on possible reasons for this, cf. Cormack (2003). The one verse in *Hungrvaka* is composed by Rúnólfr, the son of bishop Ketill Þorsteinsson, for the dedication of the cathedral church at Skálholt in the episcopate of Klængur Þorsteinsson (Ásdís Egilsdóttir, ed. 2002a: 36–7); Klængur is also known as a skald, and is in fact called “hit mesta skáld” (“the greatest skald”) in *Hungrvaka* (Ásdís Egilsdóttir, ed. 2002a: 34); cf. also Guðrún Nordal (2001: 36–9).

⁵³ Jørgensen (1982: 5).

that in Iceland “episcopum suum habent pro rege; ad illius nutum respicit omnis populus; quicquid ex Deo, ex scripturis, ex consuetudine aliarum gentium ille constituit, hoc pro lege habent”.⁵⁴ Perhaps viewing the bishop as a king goes too far, but we should note that in *Hungrvaka* too, we are told about the bishop Gizurr Ísleifsson: “ok var rétt at segja at hann var bæði konungr ok byskup yfir landinu meðan hann lifði”.⁵⁵

Thus if we look at Icelandic traditions of both Icelandic and Norwegian history, we find that a more or less continuous past is preserved about Norwegian kings from origins (potentially in Troy) to the present; Iceland’s history features either as an appendage, in the kings’ sagas, or is dealt with extensively in sagas about skalds and early settlers (*Íslendingasögur*; *Landnámabók*); contemporary magnates (*Sturlunga saga*); and for the period c.1050–1130, our information comes largely from narratives about bishops, all of whom were said to be learned and had spent time abroad, and all of whom belonged to the leading families of Iceland (some indeed traced their descent from the Norwegian kings and thus indeed from Troy). These varied forms of narrative treating the Icelandic past, all of which emerged in the period c.1150–c.1250, and in many cases around the same monastic schools in Iceland, are our primary sources for the historical consciousness of Icelanders. There is surely some significance to the fact that different forms of historical writing were used for different periods of Icelandic history; and the changing degree to which Norway features in this history (very little in the *Biskupa sögur* and *Landnámabók*; more in the *Íslendingasögur*; dominant in the *konungasögur*) is surely also of importance. The implications of these differences need further examination.

We should remember also that the Norwegian and Icelandic pasts were not the only ones of interest to Icelanders. The same fertile period in which the kings’ sagas were composed saw the translation of a number

⁵⁴ “Their bishop is like a king to them; the people follows his direction, and hold as law whatever he ordains following God, Scripture, and the customs of other peoples” (Schmiedler and Trillmich, eds and trans. 1968: 486).

⁵⁵ “He was, in truth, both king and bishop of the land as long as he lived” (Ásdís Egilsdóttir, ed. 2002a: 16). On the sagas of bishops in relation to kings’ sagas, cf. Ármann Jakobsson (1997: 290–6); in this context we should recall that one of the sagas of bishops, *Jóns saga helga* (Foote, ed. 2003), about Jón Ögmundarson, bishop of Hólar (1106–21), was based on a Latin narrative composed by the same Gunnlaugr Leifsson who wrote a life of Óláfr Tryggvason. Note also the argument of Sverrir Tómasson (2002): the poem *Nóregs konungatal* was composed at Oddi, in part at least as a means of praise for Jón Loftsson (the chieftain at Oddi and father of a bishop); according to Sverrir, the poem is an expression of a monarchical ideology in Iceland that views chieftains (of Jón’s lineage) as kings.

of other historical or quasi-historical works relating to other periods and parts of Europe (cf. chapter three), and from the recording of the poems of the so-called *Poetic Edda*,⁵⁶ it is apparent that the 'Germanic' past was also preserved in Iceland.⁵⁷ Thus we have an apparent concern with pasts of different kinds and from different places; most scholarship that has addressed the issue of the use of the past in Iceland has focused on the *Íslendingasögur*,⁵⁸ with some attention also given to the *fornaldarsögur*,⁵⁹ and less to the *Poetic Edda*.⁶⁰ I would suggest that the kings' sagas—relatively little studied from this perspective—need to be integrated into the broader picture, along with, perhaps, the sagas about the 'kings of Iceland', the bishops. It is possible to show that the narratives of Iceland itself—the *Íslendingasögur*, *Ísl* and *Landnámabók*—have a purpose of dealing with the differences between then and now, narrating origin myths of sorts, and providing a worthy past, which is, however, firmly past: this past provides legitimacy for much in the present, but is not something one wishes to return to—or is it? Without necessarily rejecting the arguments of Harris

⁵⁶ The poems accepted as belonging to this group are for the most part found in Reykjavík, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum, GKS 2365 4to, which dates to the last third of the thirteenth century. The manuscript contains a cycle of poems, beginning with mythological works that have many elements in common with what we learn about pre-Christian Scandinavian religion from Snorri's *Edda*, and in its second half moves to heroic poetry about figures also known from other Germanic traditions. The second half of the cycle therefore certainly contains historical material, however much its accuracy might be faulty (though we should note that many of the principal figures do relate in some way to known historical personages). The standard edition remains that of Gustav Neckel, revised by Hans Kuhn (1983); for an annotated translation, see Orchard (trans. 2011). For introductions: Gunnell (2005); Vésteinn Ólason (2006: 7–27); specifically on the mythological poems: Abram (2011: 16–20; 222–31; and *passim*). Harris (1985) remains absolutely essential for a thorough, magisterial account of the main issues of the scholarship; the ongoing Frankfurt commentary project (von See et al., 1997ff.) provides the essential reference work for these very complex texts, as well as offering close literal translations, and occasionally (without explicitly noting the fact) alternative readings to the Neckel/Kuhn edition. On the historical background to the heroic lays of the *Edda* and the potential difficulties arising from the term 'Germanic', cf. Ghosh (2007; 2009: 15–16; 229–37).

⁵⁷ Hans Kuhn points out that the longer sagas in *Hkr* tend to be about the kings who had more adventures, and are structured around "personalized encounters" (1976: 37); the real political issues are often passed over, and kings who had long, successful and peaceful reigns, ensuring prosperity, tend to receive shorter shrift. This is reminiscent of the move from the political/historical to the personal that we tend to find in the heroic lay based on historical fact. Could the extensive preservation of such heroic material have influenced the saga writers' conception of how to shape historical narratives?

⁵⁸ See for example Glauser (2000); and Vésteinn Ólason (1998), with references to the vast body of older scholarship.

⁵⁹ Thus for example Mitchell (1991, esp. 114–36); Torfi Tulinius (2000; 2002).

⁶⁰ Meulengracht Sørensen (1988); Haimar (1992; 1993).

and Weber with regard to religion and culture,⁶¹ we should also consider the political import of these sagas: they tell of an age of Icelandic independence, often in the face of an overbearing Norwegian king, Haraldr hárfagri Hálfðanarson—the king who is supposed to have united Norway, and from whom later kings liked to claim descent. Perhaps this past was indeed a wished-for alternative to Norwegian dominance in the thirteenth century, and this nostalgia motivated the composition of these works of Icelandic history.

Where, we should ask, do the other narratives of the past fit within the broader discourses about the past in medieval Iceland? Were the kings' sagas only of importance with regard to an immediate political context in the present, in that they presented reflections on Norway's monarchy, and positive views of Icelanders, at a time when Iceland was threatened with annexation by Norway? Or do these works also say something more generally about the use of and approach to the past in Iceland? To put the question differently: quite apart from their reflection of an immediate political context, what do the kings' sagas tell us about the overall historical consciousness in Iceland around 1200? Given that for *Snorra Edda* and Ari at least, the Norwegian kings—and indeed the Icelandic magnates—were related to the great races described in *Trójumanna saga*, what relation does the past of classical antiquity have to the histories of Iceland and Norway?⁶² An elementary response to the question would be that Icelanders simply adopted what they saw was important in the places they went to study: the story of Troy was extremely popular in England and Francia, and was used in both places for specific purposes within the tradition of 'national' historiography. But if stories of Rome, Greece and Troy were adapted to the Icelandic context because, apart from being good stories, they were a part of the cultural inheritance actively acquired by Icelanders during their education abroad, how much of the function of these stories in those foreign cultural contexts was also acquired and adapted? To what extent did the notion of a Trojan origin of the Icelanders

⁶¹ Harris (1986); Weber (1987).

⁶² Most recently, Randi Eldevik (2004) has raised the question of the function of the Trojan past in Iceland, showing how the sources are adapted to make the stories fit better in an Icelandic context; she does not, however, address the issue of the value of the stories within this context. According to Würth, the primary function of the classicising histories was educational (in a moral sense, rather than restricted solely to language and writing), though she acknowledges that it is hard to distinguish clearly between 'prodesse' and 'delectare' (1998: 182–6); she does not, however, go into the question of the place of the classical past in Icelandic historical consciousness.

take root, and for what reason?⁶³ It is interesting to note that while the Norman 'Gesta regum' do present a parallel of sorts to the kings' sagas, there could be no possible parallel for any Icelandic histories of Iceland: there were no other countries without kings.⁶⁴ Thus if there was a new conception of how history should be written, and this was influenced by foreign sources, it is perhaps only natural that the subject matter would not be primarily Icelandic.⁶⁵

Another fundamental question to be addressed in connection with the issues raised here is the matter of manuscript witnesses and modern editorial practices. Thus far—following the overwhelming trend of the scholarship—I have referred often to individual texts and to their authors; but the fact is that each text is preserved within one or more manuscripts, along with other texts, and each complete manuscript is thus, primarily, reflective of both the political context and the historical consciousness of the time in which it was produced, and only secondarily of the putative time of authorship of the individual texts it contains.

⁶³ On the Trojan origins of the Scandinavian peoples, cf. Faulkes (1978–9; 1993); Rowe (1994: 160–3); Simek (2002); Sverrir Jakobsson (2005: 180–4); Wanner (2008: 148–53). It seems apparent that the purpose of adopting this myth was primarily to establish some sort of comparable status to the cultures of classical antiquity, of which Rome remained the most important model—recall that the only emperor acknowledged during the middle ages was titled emperor of Rome, regardless of how much (or little) authority he ever had there; and further, that Rome was the centre of the Church. The first evidence of the Trojan origin myth being cultivated in post-imperial western Europe outside Italy comes from seventh-century Francia, on which cf. Ghosh (2009: 85–101); more generally on the popularity of the Trojan myth in medieval Europe, see Graus (1989), and for a much broader-ranging study on the literary and political uses of the myth in late-medieval England, France, and Norman Sicily, cf. the monumental work of Keller (2008). I argued with regard to the Franks that using this myth could be a means of making one's own people comparable, but nevertheless distinct and perhaps superior from the Romans; this might be the case in Scandinavia too, especially if one accepts Simek's argument (2002) that the source for the Scandinavian version of the myth was in twelfth-century French tradition. Such a reading is entirely compatible with von See's statement that "Snorri spurns the idea of *translatio* and *renovatio*" (1999: 346); von See bases his argument on the fact that Snorri does not link his myth to the Roman origin narrative, and in fact chooses to show his Northmen as fleeing Roman violence—which is precisely what happens in both early versions of the Frankish myth, with the difference being that it is Franks, not Northmen, who flee the Romans.

⁶⁴ In this context, cf. the speculation of Würth (cited above at n. 32) that the early interest in Rome might have been fuelled by the fact that this would have been the only other king-less society widely known; perhaps for this reason, one might add, a Trojan past might have seemed particularly attractive.

⁶⁵ Cf. the interesting and somewhat unusual perspective on historical writing in Iceland given by James Fentress and Chris Wickham, who stress the social, political and economic context of historiography, and how these were very different in Iceland from those of other works and traditions in medieval Europe (1992: 163–72).

The attitudes engendered in the manuscript by these contexts could, of course, coincide with those of the putative time of the texts' composition; this is not, however, something that can or should be taken for granted. Future analyses would need to pay more attention to the texts within their manuscript contexts, and be open to the potential consequences of differences between the situation around 1220 (when the kings' sagas were supposedly composed) and the later thirteenth century and beyond (when these sagas were actually written); such studies might prove very illuminating with regard to the function of the kings' sagas in Norway and Iceland in the period in which the extant manuscripts were produced, and might also further undermine faith in the authentic antiquity of the material of the sagas. In this respect, Boulhosa's recent study of legal texts and *Íslendingasögur*, which is pervaded by such a critical perspective, is of fundamental importance for the close attention given to understanding expressions of Icelandic–Norwegian relations in the actual material context in which they exist;⁶⁶ it is to be regretted that the author does not devote much space at all to the kings' sagas.

It would not be possible here for me even to approach properly the question of the function of the Norwegian past, and its relationship to other pasts; but I hope the foregoing has shown that the histories of Norway cannot be understood in isolation, whether we examine their form, their use of sources, or their function and *Weltanschauung*. I am pleading here for an expansion in our conception of the cultural horizons of the audiences and authors with regard to the various modes of writing about the past in medieval Iceland. Generic classification is, to a large extent, our invention, and certainly with regard to concepts or relative authenticity, it does not really derive from anything inherent in our sources: there is no reason to believe that thirteenth-century Icelanders felt that texts we classify as 'fiction' were any less authentic than those we classify as 'histories'.⁶⁷ I would suggest, therefore, that to understand the sense of history of the audiences of the kings' sagas, we need to study them alongside the other genres of writing about the past, asking the same kinds of questions across genres.⁶⁸ This is especially important since it is apparent

⁶⁶ Boulhosa (2005); see especially pp. 21–31, with further references, for the methodology.

⁶⁷ Cf. Bibire (2007); and for comparanda from France and Germany, see especially Green (2002a; 2002c), and Haug (1997; 2003); see also the discussion and the scholarship works cited in chapter two, at n. 109.

⁶⁸ Cf. in this context Krag's view (1991: 212–21) that the only distinction between genres is whether they dealt with the distant or recent past, suggesting therefore that texts

that the audiences of these different categories of works would probably have been the same. It is therefore necessary to attempt to understand the conception of the past as a whole; I would suggest that rather than viewing the various types of narratives about the past as discrete genres, it would be better to view them as a kind of generic continuum, which, taken together, may be understood as an expression of the Icelanders' sense of history.⁶⁹

Andersson's latest monograph makes a similar point from the perspective purely of literary evolution, arguing that the various genres of sagas represent a number of varied but equally prevalent forms of literary reflection on the past, with different forms dominant at different times.⁷⁰ The historical and hagiographical works appear to come first, and may have provided models for what we think of as the fictional works—but was there really any distinction in the minds of contemporary audiences with regard to truth content (cf. the comments on history and fiction in chapter two at nn. 104–9; 171)? It is surely no coincidence that the kings' sagas of the compendia, the early *Íslendingasögur* (most of which are about skalds in the service of Norwegian kings), as well as the slightly later *samtíðarsögur*, were all probably first composed only around the time Iceland's independence began to appear somewhat challenged, and shortly after it was absorbed into the Norwegian kingdom; and the mature *Íslendingasögur* and the *fornaldarsögur* (in their present form, at any rate) probably postdate the loss of Icelandic independence. Although

like *Ynglinga saga* are better viewed in comparison with some of the *fornaldarsögur* than alongside the sagas of late eleventh- and early twelfth-century kings. On the difficulties of generic classification in the study of Old Norse literature, see most recently the discussion in Phelpsstead (2007: 39–76), which addresses explicitly the relationship between kings' sagas and hagiographies; see also Laity (2004), who finds that while *Hkr* is influenced by *Ólhelg*, it is also a very independent narrative, with less stress on the specifically hagiographic topoi, while nevertheless clearly presenting the king as a saint. Of the older literature, see especially the influential works of Harris (1975) and Lönnroth (1975b).

⁶⁹ Gert Kreutzer's examination (1994) of the changing image of Haraldr hárfagri presents a fruitful example of asking questions relating to notions of history (here in a very narrow context) across genres and time periods; he argues that while *Ísl* and *Hkr* present neutral or positive depictions of Haraldr, almost all other Icelandic texts—which are invariably from a time in which Iceland was increasingly under Norwegian dominance—view him negatively. The apparent creation of the myth of Haraldr's tyranny being the cause of the settlement and foundation of Iceland during a time of (from an Icelandic perspective) renewed Norwegian tyranny is surely significant. These themes are further studied in a forthcoming Oxford dissertation by Robert Avis that examines the 'social mythology' of Icelandic identity, mainly in the *Íslendingasögur*, and includes a detailed analysis of the depiction of Haraldr hárfagri's portrayal in Icelandic texts.

⁷⁰ Andersson (2006).

it is impossible accurately to date any of the sagas, since all survive in manuscripts later than the putative date of composition, there would seem to be a consensus that the earliest written works in Old Norse were hagiographies (including the early sagas on Óláfr helgi Haraldsson) and histories, of Norwegian and other kings, and of the other Atlantic islands under Norwegian rule; the exception is *Ísl*, though we should recall that the lost first recension also included a history of Norwegian kings, who were also the subject Sæmundr's lost work. The first *Íslendingasögur* were probably composed around the same time as, or possibly shortly after *Msk*, and the bulk of them, and the *fornaldarsögur*, were written after the composition of the three compendia. Why was there a predominance of works dealing with relatively recent history in the earlier period, and texts concerned with what seems to us to be a more mythical distant past in the later period?⁷¹

We would also need to examine the reception of earlier written narratives, and of the kings' sagas towards the end of the thirteenth century and beyond, to judge the changes in historical consciousness: even if no new kings' sagas were written at the time the *fornaldarsögur* and the latest of the *Íslendingasögur* were brought to parchment (and perhaps composed), they were still being copied, a fact that in itself might tell us something about their place in the historical consciousness of the time. We need to be more free of the modern editions,⁷² and pay closer heed to the manuscript contexts of the extant sagas, and their relationships to the other texts with

⁷¹ Note that the *Íslendingasögur* that are thought to be of early date tend to be those that are about skalds, most of whom served Norwegian kings at some point; they could thus in some way be said to be related to the matter of the kings' sagas. My observations regarding chronology (which follow Andersson 1999; 2006) should be taken as very tentative; there are no means by which one can accurately date most of the surviving material, and in almost every case, it seems to be certain that there were some sort of antecedents—probably both oral and written—to the sagas in their extant forms. We cannot know whether these oral predecessors of the sagas that were written later were also themselves later than the oral predecessors of sagas that reached parchment at an earlier date; there is, nevertheless, surely some significance to the relative chronology even of *writing* the material, regardless of whether or not later and earlier written works had oral antecedents of the same age.

⁷² The editorial practices thus far generally followed in the production of modern saga editions have also been relatively less theorised than is the case with, for example, English or German texts from the middle ages; we do need a good deal more discussion about the nature of the editions we use, and the possibility of entirely new editions of the kings' sagas that might allow us to understand better how these works were actually received and used. These issues are considered in some detail, with extensive reference to the scholarship on other traditions, in Quinn and Lethbridge (eds 2010). Unfortunately, apart from *Orkneyinga saga*, none of the kings' saga editions are analysed therein; this volume will nevertheless be of use even with relation to the compendia.

which they are physically connected in these codices.⁷³ There needs to be, overall, a more thorough examination of the ways in which the notions of truth and authenticity were dealt with across genres, in order that we might better understand whether there were, in fact, differing claims in these regards with respect to different genres, and over a lengthy period of time; we should perhaps also begin to ask if we can differentiate between the function and purpose of works in their manuscript context and in the putative period of their origin.

This is not to suggest that in medieval Iceland—as in modern Britain or North America, for example—people were unable to think of the past in different ways: we surely manage to juggle different conceptions of history when reading, say, *Ivanhoe*, and Malcolm Barber, on the Templars. We believe we have clear notions—clearer than those that existed in the middle ages—separating ‘history’ from ‘historical fiction’; but surely ‘fiction’ influences how we think and feel about the past at least as much as does ‘history’; and even the most ‘objective’ academic histories are certainly at the very least constructions of their authors, and not necessarily representative of any sort of absolute ‘truth’ or ‘facts’. Our conceptions of the past are multiple, and do not exist in total disconnection from each other, and I would argue that the historical conceptions of medieval Icelanders were also not as neatly separated as our generic classifications make them appear. The questions raised in chapter two, regarding the relative functions of verse and prose, and the authenticity ascribed to them by the saga authors, apply also to other Icelandic genres, as well as to many works from other cultures which might have influenced Icelandic authors. The influence of non-native sources in shaping specific narratives similarly points to links with a broader range of intellectual contexts. Our understanding of the origin, function and putative authenticity (for the saga authors) of verse and prose, as well as our deeper knowledge of their use of foreign sources, and the relation of the kings’ sagas to other Scandinavian narratives, in the vernacular and Latin, must impinge heavily on how we believe medieval Icelanders viewed the past.

⁷³ While there are many studies of the manuscripts of *Msk*, these are oriented towards source criticism rather than literary interpretation. First steps in the direction I have suggested are in Boulhosa’s work on *Íslendingasögur* and the legal texts relating to Iceland’s annexation by Norway (2005), which is one of the most important monographs of critical scholarship in the field of Old Norse-Icelandic studies of the past decade; another work giving close heed to manuscript context, though less critical than Boulhosa’s monograph, is Rowe’s book on *Flatexjarbók* (2005), which analyses the function of this collection of texts in the political context of the time in which the manuscript was compiled, the late fourteenth century.

CHRONOLOGY

In the following chronology are provided the dates of the reigns of the Norwegian kings up to Hákon Hákonarson, along with the dates of some of the more important skalds and some of the significant events of Norwegian/Scandinavian cultural history that might be useful aids for orientation and contextualising the sources and arguments discussed above. All dates given conform largely to the current scholarly consensus (insofar as there is one), and less to the critique provided in the text above; they should thus be understood as strictly provisional, as there is no good evidence to support much of the chronology before the end of the eleventh century

c.793	First viking raid on Northumbria
<i>fl.</i> mid-tenth century?	Bragi Boddason, the earliest named (possibly historical?) skald, said to be the composer of <i>Ragnarsdrápa</i> , preserved in <i>Snorra Edda</i>
c.800 onwards	Danes and Norwegians trade with, plunder, and settle in northern England, Scotland and Ireland
c.850	Beginning of Scandinavian settlements in England
c.866–c.954	Scandinavian rule of York (Jórvík; Eoforwic)
c.870 onwards	Scandinavian settlement of Iceland (primarily from Norway)
c.880–c.931?	Haraldr (hárfagri?) Hálfðanarson (?); beginning of the unification of Norway
c.880 onwards	Viking settlers in northern France (later called Normandy)
<i>fl.</i> c.885–c.965?	Þorbjörn hornklofi; Þjóðólfr ór Hvíni (composer of <i>Ynglingatal</i>); Eyvindr skáldaspillir Finnsson (skalds)
from c.900	Scandinavian mercenaries in the Byzantine army (Varangians)
c.910–c.990?	Egill Skalla-Grímsson (skald and hero of <i>Egils saga</i>)
911	Normandy is created as a duchy subordinate to the kingdom of France, under Rollo (<i>Göngu-Hrólfr</i>)

930	Foundation of the <i>Alþingi</i>
c.931–c.933	Eiríkr blóðøx
c.933–c.959	Hákon góði Haraldsson (also known as Hákon Aðalsteinsfóstri)
<i>fl.</i> c.950–975	Glúmr Geirason (skald)
c.950–c.1030	Conversion of Scandinavia to Christianity
c.959–c.974	Haraldr gráfeldr
974–95	<i>de facto</i> rule of Hákon Sigurðarson, jarl of Hlaðir
c.980 onwards?	First Christian missions to Iceland
995–9	Óláfr Tryggvason
<i>fl.</i> c.995	Einarr skálaglamm (skald)
999/1000	Conversion of Iceland to Christianity
999–1015	Eiríkr and Svein Hákonarsynir, jarls of Hlaðir
<i>fl.</i> c.1000	Hallfróðr vandræðaskáld (skald)
1015–28	Óláfr helgi Haraldsson
1016–42	Danish rule of England under Knútr (Canute/ Cnut) and his sons
<i>fl.</i> c.1015–1030	Þormóðr Bersason Kolbrúnarskáld
<i>fl.</i> c.1015–c.1047	Sigvatr Þórðarson (skald)
1028–1035	Reign over Norway of Knútr of Denmark
<i>fl.</i> c.1030–c.1060	Arnórr jarlaskáld Þórðarson; Þjóðólfr Arnórsson (skalds)
1030	Death of Óláfr helgi Haraldsson at the battle of Stiklarstaðir
c.1031–c.1035	Haraldr harðráði Sigurðarsson in Russia and the near east
1035–46	Magnús góði Ólafsson
1045–6	Joint rule of Magnús Ólafsson and Haraldr harðráði Sigurðarsson
1046–66	Haraldr harðráði Sigurðarsson
1056	Ísleifr Gizursson consecrated first native bishop of Iceland, with his seat at Skálholt
1066	Haraldr harðráði Sigurðarsson killed at the battle of Stamford Bridge; William of Normandy conquers England
1066–93	Óláfr kyrr Haraldsson
1067/8	Birth of Ari Þorgilsson
1067–9	Joint rule of Óláfr Haraldsson and Magnús Haraldsson

- c.1070 William of Jumièges: *Gesta Normannorum ducum* (the work was later modified by Robert of Torigni and Orderic Vitalis)
- 1093–4/5 Joint rule of Magnús berfoettr Ólafsson and Hákon Magnússon
- 1094/5–1103 Magnús berfoettr Ólafsson
- 1103–22/3 Joint rule of Magnús's sons Eysteinn, Sigurðr (Jórsalafári) and Óláfr
- 1106 Jón Ögmundarson is consecrated as the first bishop of Hólar; Iceland now has two dioceses at Skálholt and Hólar
- 1108–11 Crusade of Sigurðr Jórsalafári Magnússon
- c.1116 *Povest' vremennykh let*
- 1117–18 Icelandic laws first written down
- fl. c.1120–c.1155 Einarr Skúlason (skald); a cleric and court poet, he was the first skald systematically to integrate Christian imagery into skaldic verse
- 1120–7 William of Malmesbury: *Gesta regum Anglorum*
- 1122/3–30 Sigurðr Jórsalafári Magnússon
- 1125 First (now-lost) version of Ari's *Íslendingabók*
- 1130–4 Joint rule of Magnús Sigurðsson and Haraldr gilli Magnússon
- 1133 Foundation of the Benedictine monastery at Þingeyjrar, the first monastery in Iceland
- c.1133 *Libellus Islandorum/Íslendingabók* (second recension)
- 1134 Beginning of civil wars in Norway
- 1135–6 Haraldr gilli Magnússon
- 1136–7 Joint rule of Haraldr's sons Ingi krókhryggr, Sigurðr munn and Eysteinn
- c.1138 Geoffrey of Monmouth: *Historia regum Britanniae*
- c.1140 Orderic Vitalis: *Historia ecclesiastica*
- c.1140–c.1150? *Háttalykill*, a verse treatise on skaldic verse thought to betray influence of Latin education
- c.1141 *Chronicon Roskildense*
- c.1150? **Hryggjarstykki*; Geoffrey of Monmouth: *Vita Merlini*
- c.1150 First Icelandic manuscript fragments
- 1150–80 *Plácítúsdrápa*

- 1152–3 National assembly in Trondheim; establishment of Norwegian archbishopric at Niðaróss; regulations regarding the Church's relationship to the kings and to society
- 1152–c. 1190? *Veraldar saga*
- 1154–9 *Leiðarvísir* (itinerary of holy places) composed by Abbot Nikulás Bergsson of Munkaþverá
- 1155 Foundation of the Benedictine monastery of Munkaþverá
- 1157–61 Ingi krókhryggr Magnússon; Hákon herðibreiðr Sigurðsson is counter-king
- c.1160–c.1175? *Historia Norwegie*
- 1161–84 Reign of Magnús Erlingsson, the son of Jarl Erlingr skakki, who is his regent until 1163/64
- 1162 Hákon herðibreiðr Sigurðsson is killed in battle
- 1163/4 Magnús Erlingsson is crowned king
- c.1170 *First Grammatical Treatise*; **Hryggjarstykki*
- 1177–1202 Sverrir Sigurðarsson is proclaimed the new counter-king by the Birkibeinar; his rule is marked by much conflict with many regional magnates, and also with the Norwegian Church
- 1178/9 Birth of Snorri Sturluson
- 1179 Erlingr skakki killed in battle
- c.1180 Theodoricus Monachus: *Historia de Antiquitate regum Norwagensium*
- 1184 Magnús Erlingsson killed in battle
- 1185–8 Sven Aggesen: *Historia brevis regum Dacie*
- before 1190? *Rómverja saga*
- c.1190 *Ágrip*; Oddr Snorrason's Latin saga on Óláfr Tryggvason
- c.1197 The beginning of the veneration as a saint of the reforming bishop of Skálholt, Þorlákr Þórhallson (1178–93), declared the first Icelandic saint in 1199
- c.1200 *Legendary saga*; Oddr Snorrason's Latin life of Óláfr Tryggvason is translated into Old Norse; Gunnlaugr Leifsson's sagas (in Latin) on Óláfr Tryggvason and bishop Jón Qgmundarson of Hólar; the first of the *Biskupa sögur*; *Orkneyinga saga*; **Færeyinga saga*; *Sverris saga*; *Hungrvaka*; *Breta sögur*

c.1200–c.1230?	Possible period of composition of the earliest <i>Íslendingasögur</i> (the principal skald sagas, including <i>Egils saga</i> and <i>Fóstbræðra saga</i>); <i>Tróju-manna saga</i>
1200–30	<i>Jómsvíkinga saga</i>
1202–4	Hákon Sverrisson
1204–17	Ingi Bárðarson (Birkibeinar faction, and thus Sverrir's descendant)
1207–17	Filippus Simonsson counter-king
c.1208	Saxo Grammaticus: <i>Gesta Danorum</i>
1214	Birth of Sturla Þórðarson
1215–18	Snorri Sturluson is lawspeaker in Iceland
1217–63	Hákon Hákonarson; the final political unification of Norway takes place by the end of his reign
1218–20	Snorri Sturluson in Norway
c.1220	<i>Morkinskinna</i> ; <i>Snorra Edda</i>
1222–31	Snorri Sturluson is lawspeaker in Iceland
c.1225	<i>Fagrskinna</i>
c.1225–c.1235	<i>Heimskringla</i>
1226	<i>Tristrams saga</i>
c.1226–c.1260	First wave of translated Norse romances; <i>Strengleikar</i> , a translation of Old French <i>lais</i> , including eleven by Marie de France
1237–9	Snorri Sturluson in Norway
1241	Death of Snorri Sturluson
c.1250	Oldest surviving manuscript fragment of one of the <i>Íslendingasögur</i>
c.1262	<i>Íslendinga saga</i>
1262–4	Iceland is subjugated to the Norwegian crown
1275	Codes Regius of eddic poems; <i>Morkinskinna</i> (manuscript)
1275–80	<i>Landnámabók</i> ; <i>Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar</i>

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The bibliography below provides full references for all the works cited in the present study; this headnote is intended to provide, for those who are not specialists in medieval Scandinavian studies, a first orientation to translations of primary source material, and to recent surveys and research resources (primarily in English) relevant for the issues covered in the text (note that Icelandic authors are listed by their forenames, not their patronymic; thus Ármann Jakobsson is to be found under Ármann, not Jakobsson).

One of the major aids to scholarship in the field of kings' saga studies in the past two decades has been the publication of a number of excellent translations of the relevant texts, which make it more easily possible for the study of the kings' sagas to be integrated into the broader study of European historiography in the central middle ages, and also make these fascinating works more accessible to the interested general reader. The bibliography therefore provides references to all recent English translations for those wishing to pursue the questions raised here further, but lacking sufficient command of the original languages. Of particular note because of their extensive scholarly apparatus are the translation of *HARN* by McDougall and McDougall, and the edition of *HN* by Ekrem and Mortensen, with a translation by Peter Fisher; the essays and commentary by Ekrem and Mortensen are of fundamental importance for further scholarship on *HN*. The translation of *Msk* by Andersson and Gade (*MskAG*), with its extensive introduction and apparatus, sets the study of this text on new footing, and should always be consulted when working on *Msk* (a process made easier by the translators' helpful inclusion of page number references to the editions of both Finnur Jónsson and C. R. Unger), as it is based on a new assessment of the textual relationships, and presents, in effect, a completely new edition in translation, with extensive text-critical apparatus and concordance of passages shared with *Fsk* and *Hkr*.

The most important recent project of editing and translating in the field of Old Norse studies is without question the monumental new edition of the complete corpus of skaldic verse, of which two volumes have currently appeared; the poetry from the kings' sagas is contained in volumes 1 (Whaley, ed. and trans. forthcoming) and 2 (Gade, ed. and trans. 2009). These works present the texts, manuscript variants, and clear English translations, along with extensive discussion of context and brief biographies of the skalds. They also provide extensive notes on the content of the verses, and full bibliographies of the relevant scholarship; they will remain the standard editions and reference works for the skaldic corpus for the foreseeable future.

Although necessarily somewhat idiosyncratic and certainly not intended to serve as a guide to the kings' sagas, Page (1995) is a primary source-based introduction to Scandinavian (principally social and cultural) history c.800–c.1100 that is very useful for students and non-specialists; Page presents heavily annotated translations of a wide range of selections of skaldic and eddic verse, runic inscriptions, saga narratives, and some relevant non-Scandinavian material (including excerpts from the *ASC* and the *Povest' vremennykh let*), which, taken together with Page's extensive commentary and discussion of the problems posed by the source materials cited, quite effectively provide a 'feel' of the 'viking age' that is, however, suffused with acute critical judgement. A more comprehensive selection of texts in translation, with greater attention to topics such as women, material culture, and Scandinavians in Ireland, Scotland, Russia and the middle east (including excerpts from Celtic, Greek, Russian and Arabic sources), is given in Somerville and McDonald (ed. and trans. 2010); although containing more than twice the amount of primary material as Page (1995), this work is very sparsely annotated, and provides less helpful introductory matter to contextualise the sources, but is nevertheless a very useful compilation of texts for the reader without facility in Old Norse.

For annotated bibliographic guides to scholarship on the kings' sagas, skaldic verse, and Old Norse literature more generally, readers should consult the following works of reference: Andersson and Gade (1991) review thoroughly about 80 items of the German-language scholarship from middle years of the 1980s, much of which remains of great value; for the older literature, the essays in Clover and Lindow (eds. 1985) are indispensable, and the preface to the reprint of 2005 provides a useful, though very lightly annotated supplement; Whaley (1993a) provides a survey of research on the kings' sagas that supplements well Andersson's still-indispensable overview of the older scholarship kings' sagas (1985). Clover and Lindow (eds. 1985) can be usefully supplemented by the more interpretative surveys in Clunies Ross (ed. 2000), which also cover a broader range of topics, including hagiographic texts, biblical interpretation, and the historical context of literary production; of particular relevance for the kings' sagas are the papers of Gade and Whaley, referred to frequently above, which are excellent surveys, but also provide much that goes beyond synthesis. The essays in McTurk (ed. 2005) are accessible and concise introductions to most topics of relevance to Old Norse literature; Vésteinn Ólason (2006) and Sverrir Tómasson (2006) provide more discursive, but still relatively brief and accessible introductions for non-specialists and students alike. Recent single-author introductions to Old Norse-Icelandic literature are provided by O'Donoghue (2004) and (from a more historical point of view, and more comprehensive), Uecker (2004); for an introduction to sagas alone, Clunies Ross (2010) is short but excellent.

On medieval Scandinavian history more generally, the essential first resource for further work in the field is the bibliography of Syrett (2004), which, despite its title, covers scholarship and primary sources that go well beyond the 'viking age'. It is arranged in a user-friendly format, with good cross-referencing, and covers several hundred items in all the relevant subjects, including editions and translations of written primary sources, guides to and publications of archaeological research, and a vast range of scholarship; it can also be downloaded as a pdf file online. The essays in Helle (ed. 2003) provide accessible introductions to most aspects of medieval Scandinavian history, but with very sparse bibliographic references. Kaufhold (2001) provides a succinct overview of Scandinavian history from the perspective of the 'integration' of the north within European Christendom; this work is, however, not based on a deep knowledge of any of the native sources. For an excellent and detailed, if iconoclastic and idiosyncratic introduction to Scandinavian social and cultural history in the period between c.800 and c.1100 see Christiansen (2006; a useful if severe critique of trends in modern research is presented at 301–24); Foote and Wilson (1970) remains a useful example of an older school of scholarship covering much the same period and topics. Specifically on Norwegian history in the period, an accessible English introduction is given by Helle (1995), who provides, however, very little in the way of political narrative before the thirteenth century, and no notes for those wishing to pursue the scholarship further. For a good (and recently reprinted) introduction to Icelandic history in the commonwealth period, see Jón Jóhannesson (1974), and more recently, Byock (2001), and the brief survey in Gunnar Karlsson (2000: 9–86); Byock bases his text on the *Íslendingasögur* to a much greater degree than either Jón or Gunnar. A survey of earlier research is provided in Gunnar Karlsson (1993). For an overview of Icelandic politics in the commonwealth period in English, see Jón Viðar Sigurðsson (1999).

Although not cited at any point above, the two standard reference works, Pulsiano (ed. 1993) and Simek and Pálsson (2006), remain of great value, now complemented by the excellent introductions to a vast range of topics on the early medieval Scandinavian world, with contributions from all disciplines, in Brink (ed. 2008). Of these three encyclopaedic works, Pulsiano (ed. 1993) and Brink (ed. 2008) have much more detailed entries, and cover all topics relevant to medieval Scandinavia; Simek and Pálsson (2006) is more handy and up-to-date, but restricted to literary history; while the entries for broad generic categories of literature are necessarily much less detailed than the surveys cited earlier in this headnote and in the text above, these three works often provide very valuable supplementary information on individual works and themes, and are useful complements to the more

detailed introductory volumes. Of somewhat less relevance for our topics, but still often worth consulting even in this context, are the reference works for Scandinavian mythology by Orchard (1997) and Simek (1995); they are good starting points for further work on religion- and mythology-related topics, including, for example, the material covered in *Ynglingatal*; *Ynglinga saga*; *Skjöldunga saga*; and subjects such as sacral kingship.

Primary Sources

- Andersson, Theodore M., trans. 2003. *Oddr Snorrason: The Saga of Olaf Tryggvason*. Islandica 52. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Arnaud-Lindet, Marie-Pierre, ed. and trans. 1990. *Orose: Histoires*. 3 vols. Paris: Les belles lettres.
- Ásdís Egilsdóttir, ed. 2002a. "Hungrvaka". In *Biskupa sögur*, ii: 1–43. ÍF 16. Reykjavik: Hið íslenska fornritafélag.
- . 2002b. "Þorláks saga A". In *Biskupa sögur*, ii: 45–99. ÍF 16. Reykjavik: Hið íslenska fornritafélag.
- Bartsch, Karl, Helmut de Boor, and Roswitha Wisniewski, eds. 1988. *Das Nibelungenlied*. 22nd edn. Wiesbaden: Brockhaus.
- Bately, Janet, ed. 1980. *The Old English Orosius*. Early English Text Society, Supplementary Series 6. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bethmann, Ludwig, and Georg Waitz, eds. 1878. "Historia Langobardorum". In MGH *Scriptores rerum Langobardicarum*: 12–187. Hanover: Hahn.
- Birch, Walter de Gray, ed. 1885. *Vita Haroldi: The Romance of the Life of Harold, King of England*. London: Elliot Stock.
- Bjarni Einarsson, ed. 2003. *Egils saga*. London: Viking Society for Northern Research.
- Bjarni Guðnason, ed. 1982a. "Knytlinga saga". In *Danakonunga sögur*: 91–321. ÍF 35. Reykjavik: Hið íslenska fornritafélag.
- . 1982b. "Skjöldunga saga". In *Danakonunga sögur*: 1–90. ÍF 35. Reykjavik: Hið íslenska fornritafélag.
- Blake, N. F., ed. and trans. 1962. *The Saga of the Jomsvikings*. London: Nelson.
- Bouquet, Martin, ed. 1869–1904. *Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France*. 24 vols. Paris [var. impr.].
- Braune, Wilhelm, Karl Helm and Ernst A. Ebbinghaus, eds. 1994. "Das Ludwigslied". In *Althochdeutsches Lesebuch*. 17th edn: 136–8. Tübingen: Niemeyer.
- Brown, Ursula, ed. 1952. *Þorgils saga ok hafliða*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Buchner, Rudolf, ed. and trans. 1967. *Gregor von Tours: Zehn Bücher Geschichte*. 2 vols. AQDGM 2. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- Campbell, Alistair, and Simon Keynes, eds. 1998. *Encomium Emmae Reginae*. Camden Classic Reprints 4. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Chase, Martin, ed. and trans. 2005. *Einarr Skúlason's "Geisli": A Critical Edition*. TONIS 1. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Chibnall, Marjorie, ed. and trans. 1968–80. *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*. 6 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Christiansen, Eric, trans. 1980–1. *Danorum regum heroumque historia, Books X–XVI*. 3 vols. BAR International Series 118. Oxford: British Archaeological Reports.
- . 1992. *The Works of Sven Aggesen, Twelfth-Century Danish Historian*. VSNR TS 9. London: Viking Society for Northern Research.
- . 1998. *Dudo of St Quentin: History of the Normans*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press.
- Clunies Ross, Margaret, ed. and trans. 2007. *Poetry on Christian Subjects*. 2 vols. SPSMA 7. Turnhout: Brepols.
- Cook, Robert, trans. 2001. *Njal's saga*. London: Penguin.
- Cormeau, Christoph, ed. 1996. *Walther von der Vogelweide: Leich, Lieder, Sangsprüche*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

- Cubbin, G. P., ed. 1996. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition*, vi: MS D. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer.
- Darlington, R. R., P. McGurk and Jennifer Bray, eds and trans. 1998. *The Chronicle of John of Worcester*, ii: *The Annals from 450 to 1066*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Dasent, G. W., trans. 1894. *The Saga of Hacon, and a Fragment of the Saga of Magnus*, Rolls Series 88/4. London: Eyre and Spottiswode.
- Davis, R. H. C., and Marjorie Chibnall, eds and trans. 1998. *The Gesta Gvillelmi of William of Poitiers*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Driscoll, Matthew James, ed. and trans. 1995. *Ágrip af Nóregskonungasögum*. VSNR TS 10. London: Viking Society.
- Edwards, Cyril, trans. 2010. *The Nibelungenlied: The Lay of the Nibelungs*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Edwards, Edward, ed. 1866. *Liber monasterii de Hyda*. Rolls Series 45. London: Longmans, Green, Reader and Dyer.
- Einar Ól. Sveinsson, ed. 1954. *Brennu-Njáls saga*. ÍF 12. Reykjavik: Hið íslenska fornritafélag.
- Einar Ól. Sveinsson and Matthías Þórðarson, eds. 1935. "Eyrbyggja saga". In *Eyrbyggja saga—Grœnlendinga sögur*: 1–184. ÍF 4. Reykjavik: Hið íslenska fornritafélag.
- Ellis Davidson, H. R., and Peter Fisher, trans. 1979–80. *The History of the Danes*. 2 vols. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer.
- Evans, David A. H. 1986. *Hávamál*. VSNR TS 7. London: Viking Society for Northern Research.
- Evans, D. Simon, ed. and trans. 1990. *A Mediaeval Prince of Wales: The Life of Gruffudd ap Cynan*. Felinfach: Llanerch Enterprises.
- Faulkes, Anthony, ed. 1982–98. *Snorri Sturluson: Edda*. 3 vols in 4 parts. London: Viking Society for Northern Research.
- , trans. 1995. *Snorri Sturluson: Edda*. London: J. M. Dent.
- Fellows Jensen, Gillian, ed. 1962. *Hemings Páttir Áslákssonar*. EA 3. Copenhagen: Munksgaard.
- Finnbogi Guðmundsson, ed. 1965. *Orkneyinga saga*. ÍF 34. Reykjavik: Hið íslenska fornritafélag.
- Firchow, Evelyn S., ed. and trans. 1992. *The Old Norse Elucidarius: Original Text and English Translation*. Columbia, SC: Camden House.
- Flint, Valerie, ed. 1983. "Honorius Augustodunensis: *Imago Mundi*". *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 49: 7–153.
- Foote, Peter, ed. 2003. "Jóns saga helga". In *Biskupa sögur*, i: 173–316. ÍF 15/2. Reykjavik: Hið íslenska fornritafélag.
- Friis-Jensen, Karsten, and Peter Zeeberg, ed. and trans. 2005. *Saxo Grammaticus: Gesta Danorum*. 2 vols. Copenhagen: Det Danske Sprog- og Litteraturselskab.
- Gade, Kari Ellen, ed. and trans. 2009. *Poetry of the Kings' Sagas*, ii: *From c. 1035 to c. 1300*. 2 vols. SPSMA 2. Turnhout: Brepols.
- Gertz, M. Cl., ed. 1915–16. *En ny text af Sven Aggesøns Værker genvunden paa Grundlag af Codex Arnæmagnæanus 33, 4^{to}*. Copenhagen: Gyldendal.
- . 1917–22. *Scriptores minores historię Danicę medię ævii*. 3 vols. Copenhagen: Selskabet for Udgivelse af kilder til dansk Historie.
- Giles, John Allen. 1854. "Vita et passio Waldevi comitis". In *Vita quorundam Anglo-Saxonum: Original Lives of Anglo-Saxons and Others who Lived before the Conquest*: 1–30. London: J. R. Smith.
- Grønlie, Siân, trans. 2006. *Íslendingabók, Kristni saga*. VSNR TS 18. London: Viking Society for Northern Research.
- Guðbrandur Vigfússon and C. R. Unger, eds. 1860–8. *Flateyjarbók: En samling af norske kongesagaer med indskudte mindre fortællinger om begivenheder i og udenfor Norge samt annaler*. 3 vols. Christiania [Oslo]: P. T. Malling.

- Haefele, Hans, ed. 1962. *Notkeri balbyli Gesta Karoli magni Imperatoris*. MGH SRG 12. Berlin: Weidmann.
- Halldór Hermannsson, ed. 1938. *The Icelandic Physiologus*. Islandica 27. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Hermann Pálsson and Paul Edwards, trans. 1972. *The Book of Settlements: Landnámabók*. UMIS 1. [Winnipeg]: University of Manitoba Press.
- . 1976. *Egil's saga*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- . 1982. *The History of the Earls of Orkney*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- . 1986. *Knytlinga saga: The History of the Kings of Denmark*. Odense: Odense University Press.
- Hirsch, Paul, and Hans-Eberhard Lohmann, eds. 1935. *Widukindi monachi Corbiensis Rerum gestarum Saxonicarum libri tres*. MGH SRG 60. Hanover: Hahn.
- Holder-Egger, Oswald, ed. 1911. *Einhardi Vita Karoli Magni*. MGH SRG 25. Hanover: Hahn.
- Holm-Olsen, Ludvig, ed. 1945. *Konungs skuggsiá*. Gammelnorske tekster 1. Oslo: Jacob Dybwad.
- Ihm, Maximilian, ed. 1933. *C. Svetoni Tranqvilli opera*. Leipzig: Teubner.
- Irvine, Susan, ed. 2002. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition*, vii: MS E. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer.
- Jakob Benediktsson, ed. 1944. *Veraldar saga*. SUGNL 61. Copenhagen: Luno.
- . 1968. "Landnámabók". In *Íslendingabók—Landnámabók*: 29–397. ÍF 1. Reykjavik: Hið íslenska fornritafélag.
- Johnston, George, trans. 1975. *The Faroe Islanders' Saga*. Ottawa: Oberon.
- Jón Helgason and Anne Holtsmark, eds. 1941. *Háttalykill enn forni*. BA 1. Copenhagen: Munksgaard.
- Jón Jóhannesson, Magnús Finnbogason and Krisjárn Eldjárn, eds. 1946. *Sturlunga saga*. 2 vols. Reykjavik: Sturlunguútgáfan.
- Jón Sigurðsson, ed. 1848–87. *Edda Snorra Sturlusonar*. 3 vols. Copenhagen: Qvist.
- . 1848–9. "Trójumanna saga ok Breta sögur, efter Hauksbók, med dansk oversættelse". *Annaler for Nordisk Oldkyndighed*: 3–215; 3–145.
- Kalinke, Marianne, ed. 1999. *Norse Romance*. 3 vols. Arthurian Archives 3–5. Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer.
- Kålund, Kristian, ed. 1908. *Alfrædi íslensk*. SUGNL 37. Copenhagen: S. L. Møllers bogtrykkeri.
- Keyser, Rudolph, and P. A. Munch, eds. 1848. *Norges gamle Love*, ii: *Lovgivingen under Kong Magnus Haakonssøns Regjeringstid fra 1263–1280*. Christiania [Oslo]: Grøndahl.
- Kunin, Devra, and Carl Pehlpestad, trans. 2001. *A History of Norway and the Passion and Miracles of the Blessed Óláfr*. VSNR TS 13. London: Viking Society for Northern Research.
- Lair, Jules, ed. 1865. *Dudonis Sancti Quintini De Moribus et actibus primorum Normannorum ducum*. Caen: F. Le Blanc-Hardel.
- Lammars, Walther, ed. and trans. 1960. *Otto von Freising: Chronik, oder Die Geschichte der zwei Staaten*. AQDGM 16. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- Lapidge, Michael, Pierre Monat, and Philippe Robin, ed. and trans. 2005. *Bède le Vénérable. Histoire ecclésiastique du peuple anglais*. 3 vols. Sources chrétiennes 489. Paris: Éditions du Cerf.
- Larson, Laurence Marcellus, trans. 1917. *The King's Mirror*. New York: The American-Scandinavian Foundation.
- Louis-Jensen, Jonna, ed. 1981. *Trójumanna saga: The Dares Phrygius Version*. EA 9. Copenhagen: Reitzel.
- McDougall, David, and Ian McDougall, trans. 1998. *Theodoricus monachus, Historia de antiquitate regum Norwagensium: An Account of the Ancient History of the Norwegian Kings*. VSNR TS 11. London: Viking Society.
- McGrew, Julia H. and R. George Thomas, trans. 1970–4. *Sturlunga saga*. 2 vols. Library of Scandinavian Literature 9–10. New York: Twayne Publishers.

- Magnus Magnusson and Hermann Pálsson, trans. 1966. *Snorri Sturluson: King Harald's Saga*. London: Penguin.
- Mathieu, Marguerite, ed. and trans. 1961. *Guillaume de Pouille: La geste de Robert Guiscard*. Testi e monumenti 4. Palermo: Istituto siciliano di studi bizantini e neoellenici.
- Meissner, Rudolf, trans. 1938. *Das norwegische Gefolgschaftsrecht (Hirðskrá)*. Germanenrechte: Texte und Übersetzungen 5. Weimer: Böhlau.
- Metcalf, F., ed. 1881. *Passio et miracula beati Olavi*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Mommsen, Theodor, ed. 1882. "Iordanis de origine actibusque Getarum". In *Iordanis Romana et Getica*: 53–138. MGH Auctores Antiquissimi 5/1. Hanover: Hahn.
- Munch, P. A., ed. 1860. *The Chronicle of Man and the Sudreys*. Christiania [Oslo]: Brøgger & Christie.
- Mundt, Marina, ed. 1977. *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar etter Sth 8. fol., AM 325 VIII 4°, og AM 304 4°*. Norrøne tekster 2. Oslo: Forlagsentralen.
- Mynors, R. A. B., Rodney M. Thomson and Michael Winterbottom, eds and trans. 1998. *William of Malmesbury: Gesta regum Anglorum*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Neckel, Gustav, and Hans Kuhn, eds. 1983. *Edda: Die Lieder des Codex Regius nebst verwandten Denkmälern*, i: *Text*. 5th edn. Heidelberg: Carl Winter.
- O'Brien O'Keefe, Katherine, ed. 2000. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition*, v: *MS C*. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer.
- Ogilvie, R. M., and Michael Winterbottom, eds. 1975. "Germania". In *Cornelii Taciti opera minora*: 37–62. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Ólafur Halldórsson, ed. 2006a. "Færeyinga saga". In *Færeyinga saga—Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar eptir Odd munk Snorrason*: 1–121. ÍF 25. Reykjavík: Hið íslenska fornritafélag.
- . 2006b. "Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar". In *Færeyinga saga—Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar eptir Odd munk Snorrason*: 123–362. ÍF 25. Reykjavík: Hið íslenska fornritafélag.
- Orchard, Andy, trans. 2011. *The Elder Edda: A Book of Viking Lore*. London: Penguin.
- Page, R. I., trans. 1995. *Chronicles of the Vikings: Records, Memorials and Myths*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Pertz, Georg Heinrich, ed. 1844. "Mariani Scotti chronicon". In *Annales et chronici ævi Salici*: 481–586. MGH Scriptores 5. Hanover: Hahn.
- Russell, Paul, ed. and trans. 2005. *Vita Griffini filii Conani: The Medieval Latin Life of Gruffudd ap Cynan*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.
- Schmiedler, Bernhard, and Werner Trillmich, eds and trans. 1968a. "Adam von Bremen: Bischofsgeschichte der Hamburger Kirche". In *Quellen des 9. und 11. Jahrhunderts zur Geschichte der hamburgischen Kirche und des Reiches*: 135–503. AQDGM 11. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- . 1968b. "Rimbert: Leben Ansgars". In *Quellen des 9. und 11. Jahrhunderts zur Geschichte der hamburgischen Kirche und des Reiches*: 1–133. AQDGM 11. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- Schröder, Edward, ed. 1895. *Die Kaiserchronik eines Regensburger Geistlichen*. MGH Deutsche Chroniken 1/1. Hanover: Hahn.
- Sephton, J., trans. 1899. *Sverris saga: The Saga of King Sverri of Norway*. London: Nutt.
- Short, Ian, ed. and trans. 2009. *Geffrei Gaimar: L'Estoire des Engleis*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sigurður Nordal and Guðni Jónsson, eds. 1938. "Bjarnar saga Hítðœlakappa". In *Borgfirðinga sögur*: 109–211. ÍF 3. Reykjavík: Hið íslenska fornritafélag.
- Simek, Rudolf, ed. and trans. 1990. "Abt Nikulás Itinerar ins Heilige Land". In Simek 1990: 478–90.
- Somerville, Angus, and R. Andrew McDonald, trans. 2010. *The Viking Age: A Reader*. Readings in Medieval Civilizations and Cultures 14. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Stevenson, William Henry, ed. 1959. *Asser's Life of King Alfred*. 2nd edn. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Stoob, Heinz, ed. and trans. 2002. *Helmold von Bosau: Chronica Slavorum*. 6th edn. AQDGM 19. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.

- Stubbs, William, ed. 1868–71. *Chronica Magistri Rogeri de Houedene*. 4 vols. Rolls Series 51. London: Longmans, Green & Co.
- Trillmich, Werner, ed. and trans. 1957. *Thietmar von Merseburg: Chronik*. AQDGM 9. Berlin: Rütten & Loening.
- Unger, C. R., ed. 1867. *Morkinskinna: Pergamentsbog fra første halvdel af det trettende aarhundrede: Indeholdende en af de ældste optegnelser af norske kongesagaer*. Oslo: Bentzen.
- . 1871. *Codex Frisianus: En samling af norske konge-sagaer*. Christiania [Oslo]: P. T. Mallings.
- Van Houts, Elisabeth, ed. and trans. 1992–5. *The Gesta Normannorum ducum of William of Jumièges, Orderic Vitalis and Robert of Torigni*. 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Viðar Hreinsson et al., trans. 1997a. "The Saga of Bjorn, Champion of the Hitardal People [Bjarnar saga Hítðælakappa]". In *The Complete Sagas of Icelanders*, i: 255–304. Reykjavik: Leifur Eiríksson.
- , trans. 1997b. "The Saga of the Sworn Brothers [Fóstbræðra saga]". In *The Complete Sagas of Icelanders*, ii: 329–402. Reykjavik: Leifur Eiríksson.
- , trans. 1997c. "The Saga of the People of Eyri [Eyrbyggja saga]". In *The Complete Sagas of Icelanders*, v: 131–218. Reykjavik: Leifur Eiríksson.
- Weiss, Judith, ed. and trans. 2002. *Wace's "Roman de Brut": A History of the British*. 2nd edn. Exeter: University of Exeter Press.
- Whaley, Diana, ed. and trans. forthcoming. *Poetry of the Kings' Sagas*, vol 1: *From Mythical Times to c. 1035*. SPSMA 1. Turnhout: Brepols.
- Whitelock, Dorothy, ed. and trans. 1979. *English Historical Documents*, i: c. 500–1042. 2nd edn. London: Eyre Methuen.
- Wolf, Kirsten, and Helen Maclean, eds and trans. 1999. "Parcevals saga with Valvens þátrr". In *Norse Romance*, ii: *The Knights of the Round Table*, ed. Marianne Kalinke, 103–220. Arthurian Archives 4. Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer.
- Würth, Stefanie, trans. 1996. *Isländische Antikensagas*. Munich: Diederichs.
- Þorbjörg Helgadóttir, ed. 2010. *Rómverja saga*. Stofnun Árna Magnússonar Rit 77. Reykjavik: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar.
- Þorleifur Hauksson, ed. 2007. *Sverris saga*. ÍF 30. Reykjavik: Hið íslenska fornritafélag.

Secondary Sources

- Abram, Christopher. 2001. "Scribal Authority in Skaldic Verse: Þorbjörn hornklofi's *Glymdrápa*". *ANF* 116: 5–19.
- . 2004. "Anglo-Saxon Influence in the Old Norwegian Homily Book". *MS* 14: 1–35.
- . 2011. *Myths of the Pagan North: The Gods of the Norsemen*. London: Continuum.
- Abrams, Lesley. 1995. "The Anglo-Saxons and the Christianization of Scandinavia". *ASE* 24: 213–49.
- . 1996. "Kings and Bishops in the Conversion of the Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian Kingdoms". In *Church and People in Britain and Scandinavia*, ed. Ingmar Brohed: 15–28. Bibliotheca historico-ecclesiastica Lundensis 36. Lund: Lund University Press.
- Adams, Jonathan, and Katherine Holmes, ed. 2004. *Scandinavia and Europe 800–1350: Contact, Conflict and Coexistence*, MTCNE 4. Turnhout: Brepols.
- Adolf Fríðriksson and Orri Vésteinsson. 2003. "Creating a Past: A Historiography of the Settlement of Iceland". In *Contact, Continuity, and Collapse: The Norse Colonization of the North Atlantic*, ed. James Barrett: 139–61. SEM 5. Turnhout: Brepols.
- Almqvist, Bo. 1991 [first pub. 1974–6]. "The Death Forebodings of Saint Óláfr, King of Norway, and Rögnvaldr Brúsason, Earl of Orkney: A Folkloristic and Philological Study". In *Viking Ale: Studies on Folklore Contacts between the Northern and Western Worlds*, ed. Éilís Ní Dhuibne-Almqvist and Séamas Ó Catháin: 30–64. Aberystwyth: Boethius Press.
- Amory, Frederic. 1978. "Saga Style in Some Kings' Sagas, and Early Medieval Latin Narrative". *Acta philologica Scandinavica* 32: 67–86.

- . 1979. "The Viking Hasting in Franco-Scandinavian Legend". In *Saints, Scholars and Heroes: Studies in Medieval Culture in Honour of Charles W. Jones*, ed. Margot H. King and Wesley M. Stevens, ii: 265–86. Collegeville, Minnesota: Hill Monastic Manuscript Library.
- Andersson, Theodore M. 1975. "The Viking Image in Carolingian Poetry". In *Les relations littéraires*: 217–42.
- . 1985. "Kings' Sagas (*Konungasögur*)". In Clover and Lindow, ed. 1985: 197–238.
- . 1992. Review of Krag 1991. *SS* 64: 487–9.
- . 1993. "Snorri Sturluson and the Saga School at Munkaþverá". In Wolf, ed. 1993: 9–25.
- . 1994. "The Politics of Snorri Sturluson". *JEGP* 93: 55–78.
- . 1998. "The Continuation of **Hlaðajarla saga*". *JEGP* 97: 155–67.
- . 1999. "The King of Iceland". *Speculum* 74: 923–34.
- . 2002. "The Long Prose Form in Medieval Iceland". *JEGP* 101: 380–411.
- . 2003. "Introduction". In Andersson, trans. 2003: 1–27.
- . 2004a. "The First Icelandic Kings' Saga: Oddr Snorrason's *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar* or the *Oldest Saga of Saint Olaf?*". *JEGP* 103: 139–55.
- . 2004b. "Five Saga Books for New Century". *JEGP* 103: 505–27.
- . 2006. *The Growth of the Medieval Icelandic Sagas (1180–1290)*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- . 2008a. "From Tradition to Literature in the Sagas". In Mundal and Wellendorf, eds. 2008: 7–17.
- . 2008b. "The Oral Sources of *Óláfs saga Helga* in *Heimskringla*". *SBVS* 32: 5–38.
- . 2009. "The Formation of the Kings' Sagas". In Ney, Williams and Ljungqvist, eds. 2009: 29–33.
- Andersson, Theodore M., and Kari Ellen Gade. 1991. "Recent Old Norse-Icelandic Studies in the German-Speaking Countries". *SS* 63: 66–102.
- . 2000. "Introduction". In *MskAG*: 1–83.
- Ármann Jakobsson. 1997. *Í leit að konungi: konungsmynd íslenskra konungasagna*. Reykjavík: Háskólaútgáfan.
- . 1998. "King and Subject in *Morkinskinna*". *Skandinavistik* 28: 101–17.
- . 1999. "Rundt om kongen: en genvurdering af *Morkinskinna*". *Maal og Minne* 1: 71–90.
- . 2000. "The Individual and the Ideal: the Representation of Royalty in *Morkinskinna*". *JEGP* 99: 71–86.
- . 2001a. "The Amplified Saga: Structural Disunity in *Morkinskinna*", *Medium Ævum* 70: 29–46.
- . 2001b. "Strukturelle Brüche in der *Morkinskinna*". In *Arbeiten zur Skandinavistik: 14. Arbeitstagung der deutschsprachigen Skandinavistik*, ed. Annegret Heitmann: 389–400. Frankfurt a. M.: Peter Lang.
- . 2002. *Staður í nýjum heimi: konungasagan Morkinskinna*. Reykjavík: Háskólaútgáfan.
- . 2005. "Royal Biography". In McTurk, ed. 2005: 388–402.
- Assmann, Jan. 1992. *Das Kulturelle Gedächtnis: Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen*. Munich: C. H. Beck.
- Auerbach, Erich. 1938. "Figura". *Archivum Romanicum* 22: 436–89.
- . 1953. *Typologische Motive in der mittelalterlichen Literatur*. Cologne: Petrarca-Institut.
- . 1993 [orig. pub. 1958]. *Literary Language and Its Public in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*. Trans. Ralph Manheim. Bollingen Series 74. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- . 2003 [orig. pub. 1946]. *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*. Trans. Willard R. Trask. 50th anniversary edn. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Aurell, Martin. 2007. *The Plantagenet Empire 1154–1224*. Trans. David Crouch. Harlow: Pearson Longman.

- Bagge, Sverre. 1987. *"Konungs skuggsjá": The Political Thought of the King's Mirror*. Odense: Odense University Press.
- . 1989. "Theodoricus Monachus—Clerical Historiography in Twelfth-Century Norway". *SJH* 14: 113–33.
- . 1990. "Harald Hardråde i Bysants: to fortellinger, to kulturer". In *Hellas og Norge: Kontakt, komparasjon, kontrast*, ed. Øivind Andersen and Thomas Hägg: 169–92. Skrifter utgitt av det Norske Institutt i Athen 2. Bergen: Klassisk institutt, Universitetet i Bergen.
- . 1991. *Society and Politics in Snorri Sturluson's Heimskringla*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- . 1995. "Nationalism in Norway in the Middle Ages". *SJH* 20: 1–18.
- . 1996. *From Gang Leader to the Lord's Anointed: Kingship in "Sverris Saga" and "Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar"*. VC 8. Odense: Odense University Press.
- . 1997. "Icelandic Uniqueness or a Common European Culture? The Case of the Kings' Sagas". *SS* 69: 418–42.
- . 2004. "A Hero between Paganism and Christianity: Hákon the Good in Memory and History". In Hoff et al., eds. 2004: 185–210.
- . 2005. "Christianization and State Formation in Early Medieval Norway". *SJH* 30: 107–34.
- . 2006. "The Making of a Missionary King: The Medieval Accounts of Olaf Tryggvason and the Conversion of Norway". *JEGP* 105: 473–513.
- Bagge, Sverre, and Sæbjørg Walaker Nordeide. 2007. "The Kingdom of Norway". In *Christianization and the Rise of Christian Monarchy: Scandinavia, Central Europe and Rus' c. 900–1200*, ed. Nora Berend: 121–66. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bandle, Oskar. 1993. "Tradition und Fiktion in der *Heimskringla*". In Wolf, ed. 1993: 27–47.
- Bandlien, Bjørn. 2006. "Political and Cultural Relations between Norway and England after the Conquest". In McKinnell, Ashurst and Kick, eds. 2006: 97–103.
- Barnes, Geraldine. 1984. "*Parcevals saga*: Riddara Skuggsjá?". *ANF* 99: 49–62.
- . 1987. "Arthurian Chivalry in Old Norse". *Arthurian Literature* 7: 50–102.
- . 1989. "Some Current Issues in *Riddarasögur* Research". *ANF* 104: 73–88.
- . 2000. "Romance in Iceland". In Clunies Ross, ed. 2000: 266–86.
- . 2007. "The 'Discourse of Counsel' and the 'Translated' *Riddarasögur*". In Quinn, Heslop and Wills, eds. 2007: 375–97.
- Battista, Simonetta. 2003. "Old Norse Hagiography and the Question of Latin Sources". In *Scandinavia and Christian Europe in the Middle Ages: Papers of the 12th International Saga Conference*, ed. Rudolf Simek and Judith Meurer. Bonn: Hausdruckerei der Universität Bonn (unpaginated copy accessed online on 16 September 2009 at <http://www.skandinavistik.uni-bonn.de/saga-conference/sagapapers.zip> [battista.doc]).
- Baumann, Richard C. 1986. "Performance and Honor in 13th-Century Iceland". *Journal of American Folklore* 99: 121–50.
- Baxter, Stephen. 2009. "Edward the Confessor and the Succession". In *Edward the Confessor: The Man and the Legend*, ed. Richard Mortimer: 77–118. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press.
- Beck, Heinrich. 1974. "Zur literaturgeschichtlichen Stellung des althochdeutschen Ludwigsliedes und einiger verwandter Zeitgedichte". *ZDA* 103: 37–51.
- . 2005. "Snorri Sturlusons Konstruktion eines Vorzeitkönigtums". In Erkens, ed. 2005: 125–40.
- Bein, Thomas. 1997. *Walther von der Vogelweide*. RUB 17601. Stuttgart: Reclam.
- Bekker-Nielsen, Hans, and Birte Carlé, eds. 1994. *Saints and Sagas: A Symposium*. Odense: Odense University Press.
- Berger, Alan. J. 1999. "*Heimskringla* and the Compilations". *ANF* 114: 5–15.
- Bergsveinn Birgisson. 2008. "What Have We Lost by Writing? Cognitive Archaisms in Skaldic Poetry". In Mundal and Wellendorf, eds. 2008: 163–84.

- Beumann, Helmut. 1950. *Widukind von Korvei: Untersuchungen zur Geschichtsschreibung und Ideengeschichte des 10. Jahrhunderts*. Abhandlungen über Corveyer Geschichtsschreibung 3. Weimar: Hermann Böhlau Nachfolger.
- . 1969. *Ideengeschichtliche Studien zu Einhard und anderen Geschichtsschreibern des früheren Mittelalters*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- . 1987. "Historiographische Konzeption und politische Ziele Widukinds von Korvei". In *La storiografia altomedievale: 875–94*. Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo 17. Spoleto: Presso la sede del centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo.
- Beyschlag, Siegfried. 1950. *Konungasögur: Untersuchungen zur Königssaga bis Snorri: Die älteren Übersichtswerke samt Ynglingasaga*. BA 8. Copenhagen: Munksgaard.
- . 1953. "Möglichkeiten mündlicher Überlieferung in der Königssaga". *ANF* 68: 109–39.
- . 1981. "Arbeitsthesen zum Geschichtswissen der Königssaga (von Harald Schönhaar bis Hakon Jarl)". In *Akten der vierten Arbeitstagung der Skandinavisten des deutschen Sprachgebiets*, ed. Fritz Paul: 73–84. Scandica wissenschaftliche Reihe 2. Hattingen: Scandica.
- . 1986. "Die Reichseinigungen der beiden Olave nach *Fagrskinna* und Snorri im Vergleich zu Skaldik und Sverrir". In *Germanic Dialects: Linguistic and Philological Investigations*, ed. Bela Brogyanyi and Thomas Krömmelbein: 9–41. Amsterdam Studies in the Theory and History of Linguistic Science, Series 4: Current Issues in Linguistic Theory 38. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Bibire, Paul. 2007. "On Reading the Icelandic Sagas: Approaches to Old Icelandic Texts". In *West over Sea: Studies in Scandinavian Sea-Borne Expansion and Settlement Before 1300*, ed. Beverley Ballin Smith, Simon Taylor, and Gareth Williams: 3–18. TNW 31. Leiden: Brill.
- Bjarni Einarsson. 1974. "On the Rôle of Verse in Saga-Literature". *MS* 7: 118–25.
- Bjarni Guðnason. 1977. "Theodoricus og íslenskir sagnaritarar". In Einar G. Pétursson and Jónas Kristjánsson, eds. 1977: 107–20.
- . 1981. "The Icelandic Sources of Saxo Grammaticus". In Karsten Friis-Jensen, ed. 1981: 79–93.
- Bolton, Timothy. 2007. "Was the Family of Earl Siward and Earl Waltheof a Lost Line of the Ancestors of the Danish Royal Family?". *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 51: 41–71.
- . *The Empire of Cnut the Great: Conquest and the Consolidation of Power in Northern Europe in the Early Eleventh Century*. TNW 40. Leiden: Brill.
- Bostock, J. Knight. 1976. *A Handbook on Old High German Literature*. 2nd edn revised by K. C. King and D. R. McLintock. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Boulhosa, Patricia Pires. 2005. *Icelanders and the Kings of Norway: Mediaeval Sagas and Legal Texts*. TNW 17. Leiden: Brill.
- . 2006. Review of Forte, Oram and Pedersen 2005. *SBVS* 30: 110–12.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1986. "The Forms of Capital". In *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. John G. Richardson: 241–58. New York: Greenwood.
- Bremmer, Rolf H., Kees Dekker and David F. Johnson, eds. 2001. *The Early Reception of Gregory the Great in Germanic Europe*. Mediaevalia Groningana New Series 4. Paris/Leuven: Peeters.
- Brink, Stefan, ed. 2008. *The Viking World*. London: Routledge.
- Bullough, Donald A. 1991. *Carolingian Renewal: Sources and Heritage*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Bumke, Joachim. 1986. *Höfische Kultur: Literatur und Gesellschaft im hohen Mittelalter*. Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag.
- Byock, Jesse L. 2001. *Viking Age Iceland*. London: Penguin.
- Caille, Jacqueline. 2005. *Medieval Narbonne: A City at the Heart of the Troubadour World*, ed. Kathryn L. Reyerson. CSS 792. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Carpenter, David. 2003. *The Struggle for Mastery: Britain 1066–1284*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Cheyette, Fredric L. 1996. Review of Reynolds 1994. *Speculum* 71: 998–1006.
- . 2001. *Ermengard of Narbonne and the World of the Troubadours*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Christiansen, Eric. 2006a. *The Norsemen in the Viking Age*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- . 2006b. Review of Forte, Oram and Pedersen 2005. *English Historical Review* 121: 190–1.
- Ciklamini, Marlene. 1978. *Snorri Sturluson*. Twayne's World Author Series 493. Boston: Twayne Publishers.
- Cleasby, Richard, and Gudbrand Vigfusson. 1957. *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*. 2nd edn, with a supplement by William Craigie. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Clover, Carol J. 1982. *The Medieval Saga*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- . 1985. "Icelandic Family Sagas". In Clover and Lindow, eds. 1985: 239–315.
- Clover, Carol J., and John Lindow, eds. 1985. *Old Norse-Icelandic Literature: A Critical Guide*. Islandica 45. Ithaca: Cornell University Press [reprinted by the University of Toronto Press in 2005 as number 42 in the series Medieval Academy Reprints for Teaching, with a new preface by Theodore M. Andersson].
- Clunies Ross, Margaret. 1999. "From Iceland to Norway: Essential Rites of Passage for an Early Icelandic Skald". *alvissmál* 9: 55–72.
- . 2000. "Medieval Iceland and the European Middle Ages". In Dallapiazza et al., eds. 2000: 111–20.
- . 2005. *A History of Old Norse Poetry and Poetics*. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer.
- . 2007. "Stylistic and Generic Definers of the Old Norse Ekphrasis". *VMS* 3: 161–92.
- . 2009a. "Medieval Icelandic Textual Culture". *Gripla* 20: 163–81.
- . 2009b. "Poets and Ethnicity". In Ney, Williams and Ljungqvist, eds. 2009: 185–92.
- . 2010. *The Cambridge Introduction to the Old Norse-Icelandic Saga*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Clunies Ross, Margaret, ed. 2000. *Old Icelandic Literature and Society*. CSML 42. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Colbert, David W. 1992. "The Middle Ages". In *A History of Danish Literature*, ed. Sven H. Rossel: 1–70. HSL 1. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Cormack, Margaret. 1993. "Saints and Sinners: Reflections on Death in Some Icelandic Sagas". *Gripla* 8: 186–218.
- . 1994. "Saints' Lives and Icelandic Literature". In Bekker-Nielsen and Carlé, eds. 1994: 27–47.
- . 2000. "Sagas of Saints". In Clunies Ross, ed. 2000: 302–25.
- . 2001. "*Egils saga*, *Heimskringla*, and the Daughter of Eiríkr blóðøx". *alvissmál* 10: 61–8.
- . 2003. "Poetry, Paganism, and the Sagas of Icelandic Bishops". In *Til heiðurs og hugbótar: greinar um trúarveðskap fyrri alda*, ed. Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir and Anna Guðmundsdóttir: 33–51. Reykholt: Snorrastofa.
- . 2005. "Christian Biography". In McTurk, ed. 2005: 27–42.
- Coupland, Simon. 1998. "From Poachers to Gamekeepers: Scandinavian Warlords and Carolingian Kings". *EME* 7: 85–114.
- Coviaux, Stéphane. 2006. "Les évêques norvégiens et les idées politiques d'occident au XII^e siècle". *Médiévales* 50: 29–46.
- Crook, Eugene J. 2001. "Gregory's *Dialogi* and the Old Norse *Njal's Saga*". In Bremmer, Dekker and Johnson, eds. 2001: 275–85.
- Dallapiazza, Michael, Olaf Hansen, Preben Meulengracht Sørensen and Yvonne S. Bonnetain, eds. 2000. *International Scandinavian and Medieval Studies in Memory of Gerd Wolfgang Weber*. Hesperides 12. Trieste: Parnaso.
- Danielsson, Tommy. 2002a. *Hrafnkels saga eller Fallet med den undflyende traditionen*. Hedemora: Gidluns Förlag.
- . 2002b. *Sagorna om Norges kungar: från Magnús góði till Magnús Erlingsson*. Hedemora: Gidluns Förlag.

- Del Zotto, Carla. 2005. "Paradigmi agiografici nella storiografia medievale sulla conversione della Scandinavia". *Rivista di cultura classica e medioevale* 47: 361–81.
- Driscoll, Matthew James. 1995. "Introduction". In Driscoll, ed. and trans. 1995: ix–xxv.
- Dronke, Peter. 1968. *Medieval Latin and the Rise of the European Love-Lyric*. 2nd edn. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- . 1992. *Verse with Prose from Petronius to Dante: The Art and Scope of the Mixed Form*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University.
- Dronke, Peter, and Ursula Dronke. 1977. "The Prologue of the *Prose Edda*: Explorations of a Latin Background". In Einar G. Pétursson and Jónas Kristjánsson, eds. 1977: 153–76.
- Dronke, Ursula, Guðrún P. Helgadóttir, Gerd Wolfgang Weber and Hans Bekker-Nielsen, eds. 1981. *Speculum Norroenum: Norse Studies in Memory of Gabriel Turville-Petre*. Odense: Odense University Press.
- Duby, Georges. 1977. *The Chivalrous Society*. Trans. Cynthia Postan. London: Edward Arnold.
- . 1982. "The Culture of the Knightly Class: Audience and Patronage". In *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, ed. Robert L. Benson and Giles Constable: 248–62. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Duczko, Władysław. 2004. *Viking Rus: Studies on the Presence of Scandinavians in Eastern Europe*. TNW 12. Leiden: Brill.
- Duggan, Joseph J. 1986. "Medieval Epic as Popular Historiography: Appropriation of Historical Knowledge in the Vernacular Epic". In *La littérature historiographique des origines à 1500*, i, ed. Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, Ursula Link-Heer and Peter-Michael Spangenberg: 285–311. Grundriss der Romanischen Literaturen des Mittelalters XI/1. Heidelberg: Carl Winter.
- Duke, Siân. 2001. "From Bede to Ari: Extending the Borders of Christendom". *Quaestio* 2: 27–42.
- Dumville, David N. 1983. "Some Aspects of Annalistic Writing at Canterbury in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries". *Peritia* 2: 23–57.
- Düwel, Klaus. 2004. "Runic". In *Early Germanic Literature and Culture*, ed. Brian O. Murdoch and Malcolm Read: 121–47. Camden House History of German Literature 1. Rochester: Camden House.
- Dørum, Knut. 2001. "Det norske riket som odel: Harald Hårfagres ætt". *HT(N)* 80: 323–42.
- Ebel, Else. 1987. "Der Fernhandel der Wikingerzeit bis in das 12. Jahrhundert in Nordeuropa nach altnordischen Quellen". In *Untersuchungen zu Handel und Verkehr der vor- und frühgeschichtlichen Zeit in Mittel- und Nord-Europa*, iv: *Handel der Karolinger- und Wikingerzeit*, ed. Klaus Düwel, Herbert Jankuhn, Harald Siems and Dieter Timpe: 266–312. Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, Philologisch-historische Klasse, 3. Folge 156. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Einar G. Pétursson and Jónas Kristjánsson, ed. 1977. *Sjötíu ritgerðir helgaðar Jakobi Benediktssyni 20 júlí 1977*. Reykjavík: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar.
- Ekrem, Inger. 2003. "Essay on Date and Purpose". In *HN*: 156–225.
- Ekrem, Inger, Lars Boje Mortensen and Karen Skovgaard-Petersen, eds. 2000. *Olavslegenden og den latinske historieskrivning i 1100-tallets Norge*. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press.
- Eldevik, Randi. 2004. "What's Hecuba to Them? Medieval Scandinavian Encounters with Classical Antiquity". In Adams and Holmes, eds. 2004: 345–54.
- Ellis Davidson, H. R. 1976. *The Viking Road to Byzantium*. London: George Allen & Unwin.
- Erkens, Franz-Reiner, ed. 2005. *Das Frühmittelalterliche Königtum: Ideelle und Religiöse Grundlagen*. ERGA 49. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Faulkes, Anthony. 1978–9. "Descent from the Gods". *MS* 11: 92–125.
- . 1983. "Pagan Sympathy: Attitudes to Heathens in the Prologue to *Snorra Edda*". In *Edda: A Collection of Essays*, ed. Robert J. Glendinning and Haraldur Bessason: 283–314. UMIS 4. [Winnipeg]: University of Manitoba Press.

- . 1993. "The Sources of *Skáldsaparmál*: Snorri's Intellectual Background". In Wolf, ed. 1993: 59–76.
- Faulkes, Anthony, and Richard Perkins, ed. 1993. *Viking Revaluations: Viking Society Centenary Symposium 14–15 May 1992*. London: Viking Society for Northern Research.
- Fell, Christine. 1981. "Vikingarvísur". In Dronke et al., eds. 1981: 106–22.
- Fentress, James, and Chris Wickham. 1992. *Social Memory*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Fidjestøl, Bjarne. 1982. *Det norrøne fyrstediktet*. Nordisk Institutt skriftserie 11. Øvre Ervik: Alvheim & Eide.
- . 1997a. "European and Native Tradition in *Óláfs saga helga*". In Fidjestøl 1997e: 184–200.
- . 1997b [orig. 1994]. "Norse-Icelandic Composition in the Oral Period". In Fidjestøl 1997e: 303–32.
- . 1997c [orig. 1993]. "Óláfr Tryggvason the Missionary: A Literary Portrait from the Middle Ages". In Fidjestøl 1997e: 201–27.
- . 1997d [orig. 1993]. "Skaldic Stanzas and Saga Prose. Observations on the Relationship between Prose and Verse in Snorri's *Heimskringla*". In Fidjestøl 1997e: 255–76.
- . 1997e. *Selected Papers*, ed. Odd Einar Haugen and Else Mundal. Trans. Peter Foote. VC 9. Odense: Odense University Press.
- Finlay, Alison. 1995. "Skalds, Troubadours and Sagas". *SBVS* 24: 105–53.
- . 2000. "Skald Sagas in Their Literary Context 2: Possible European Contexts". In Poole, ed. 2001: 232–71.
- . 2004. "Introduction". In *FskF*: 1–39.
- Fleckenstein, Josef. 1990. "*Miles und clericus* am Königs- und Fürstenhof. Bemerkungen zu den Voraussetzungen, zur Entstehung und zur Trägerschaft der höfisch-ritterlichen Kultur". In Fleckenstein, ed. 1990: 303–25.
- Fleckenstein, Josef, ed. 1990. *Curialitas: Studien zu Grundfragen der höfisch-ritterlichen Kultur*. VMPiG 100. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Fleischman, Suzanne. 1983. "On the Representation of History and Fiction in the Middle Ages". *History and Theory* 22: 278–310.
- Flood, John L., and David N. Yeandle, eds. 1989. "*mit regulu bithuungan*": *Neue Arbeiten zur althochdeutschen Poesie und Sprache*. GAG 500. Göttingen: Kümmerle.
- Foerster, Thomas. 2009. *Vergleich und Identität: Selbst- und Fremddeutung im Norden des hochmittelalterlichen Europa*. EM 14. Berlin: Akademie Verlag.
- Foote, Peter G. 1984a. "Aachen, Lund, Hólar". In *Les relations littéraires*: 53–73 [cited from the reprint with a postscript in Foote 1984b: 101–20].
- . 1984b. *Aurvandilstá*, ed. Michael Barnes, Hans Bekker-Nielsen and Gerd Wolfgang Weber. VC 2. Odense: Odense University Press.
- . 1984c. "Latin Rhetoric and Icelandic Poetry: Some Contacts". *Saga och sed*: 107–27 [cited from the reprint with a postscript in Foote 1984b: 249–70].
- . 1984d. "Sagnaskemtan: Reykjahólar 1119". *SBVS* 14: 226–39 [cited from the reprint with a postscript in Foote 1984b: 63–83].
- . 1994. "Saints' Lives and Sagas". In Bekker-Nielsen and Carlé, eds. 1994: 73–88.
- . 1998. "Introduction". In McDougall and McDougall, trans. 1998: vii–xxxi.
- . 2004. "Icelandic Historians and the Swedish Image. Comments on Snorri and his Precursors". In his *Kreddur: Select Studies in Early Icelandic Law and Literature*, 154–81. Reykjavik: Hið íslenska fornritafélag.
- Foote, Peter G., and David M. Wilson. 1970. *The Viking Achievement*. London: Sidgwick and Jackson.
- Forte, Angelo, Richard Oram and Frederik Pedersen. 2004. *Viking Empires*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Fouracre, Paul. 1989. "Using the Background to the *Ludwigslied*: Some Methodological Problems". In Flood and Yeandle, eds. 1989: 80–93.
- Frank, Roberta. 1978. *Old Norse Court Poetry: The Dróttkvætt Stanza*. Islandica 42. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

- . 1981. "Snorri and the Mead of Poetry". In Dronke et al., eds. 1981: 155–70.
- . 1985. "Skaldic Poetry". In Clover and Lindow, eds. 1985: 157–96.
- . 1991. "Germanic Legend in Old English literature". In Godden and Lapidge, eds. 1991: 88–106.
- Franklin, Simon, and Jonathan Shepard. 1996. *The Emergence of Rus: 750–1200*. London: Longman.
- Freeman, Edward A. 1875. *The History of the Norman Conquest of England, Its Causes and Its Results*, iii: *The Reign of Harold and the Interregnum*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- . 1876. *The History of the Norman Conquest of England, Its Causes and Its Results*, iv: *The Reign of William the Conqueror*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Friis-Jensen, Karsten. 1987. *Saxo Grammaticus as Latin Poet: Studies in the Verse Passages of the Gesta Danorum*. *Analecta Romana Instituti Danici, Supplementa* 14. Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider.
- . 1988. "Saxo Grammaticus's *Bjarkamál* and its Latin Models". In Janni, ed. 1988: 307–15.
- . 1992. "Saxo Grammaticus's Study of the Roman Historiographers and His Version of History". In *Saxo Grammaticus tra storiografia e letteratura*, ed. Carlo Santini: 61–81. I conveni di classicorromeno 1. Bevagna: Il calamo.
- . 1993. "Nordisk hedenskab og europæisk latinhumanisme hos Saxo". In *Norden og Europa i vikingetid og tidlig middelalder*, ed. Niels Lund: 212–32. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press.
- . 1995. "Dudo of St. Quentin and Saxo Grammaticus". In Gatti and Degl'Innocenti, eds. 1995: 11–28.
- Friis-Jensen, Karsten, ed. 1981. *Saxo Grammaticus: A Medieval Author Between Norse and Latin Culture*. *Danish Medieval History and Saxo Grammaticus* 2. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press.
- Friis-Jensen, Karsten, and Inge Skovgaard-Petersen, eds. 2000. *Archbishop Absalon of Lund and his World*. Roskilde: Roskilde museums forlag.
- Fuglesang, Signe Horn. 2007. "Ekphrasis and Surviving Imagery in Viking Scandinavia". *VMS* 3: 193–224.
- Gade, Kari Ellen. 1995. *The Structure of Old Norse Dróttkvætt Poetry*. *Islandica* 49. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- . 1997. "Northern Lights on the Battle of Hastings". *Viator* 28: 65–81.
- . 2000a. "*Morkinskinna*'s 'Giffarðsbátttr': Literary Fiction or Historical Fact?". *Gripla* 11: 181–98.
- . 2000b. "Poetry and Its Changing Importance in Medieval Icelandic Culture". In Clunies Ross, ed. 2000: 61–95.
- . 2001. "The Dating and Attributions of Verses in the Skald Sagas". In Poole, ed. 2001: 50–74.
- . 2004. "*Morkinskinna* and 25th September 1066". In Hoff et al., eds. 2004: 211–23.
- Garrison, Mary. 1994. "The Emergence of Carolingian Latin Literature and the Court of Charlemagne (780–814)". In *Carolingian Culture: Emulation and Innovation*, ed. Rosamond McKitterick: 111–40. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2000. "The Franks as the New Israel? Education for an Identity from Pippin to Charlemagne". In *The Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Yitzhak Hen and Matthew Innes: 114–61. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gatti, Paolo, and Antonella Degl'Innocenti, eds. 1995. *Dudone di San Quintino*. Trento: Università degli Studi di Trento.
- Gelsinger, Bruce E. 1988. "The Battle of Stamford Bridge and the Battle of Jaffa: a Case of Confused Identity?". *SS* 60: 13–29.
- Ghosh, Shami. 2007. "On the Origins of Germanic Heroic Poetry: A Case Study of the Legend of the Burgundians". *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur* 129: 220–52.

- . 2009. "The Barbarian Past in Early Medieval Historical Narrative". Diss. Toronto (available online at <http://hdl.handle.net/1807/19189>).
- Gisli Sigurðsson. 2004. *The Medieval Icelandic Saga and Oral Tradition: A Discourse on Method*. Trans. Nicholas Jones. Publications of the Milman Parry Collection of Oral Literature 2. Cambridge, MA: The Milman Parry Collection of Oral Literature.
- . 2007. "'The Immanent Saga of Guðmundr ríki'". In Quinn, Heslop and Wills, eds. 2007: 201–18.
- . 2008. "Orality Harnessed: How To Read Written Sagas from an Oral Culture?". In Mundal and Wellendorf, eds. 2008: 19–28.
- Glauser, Jürg. 2000. "Sagas of Icelanders (*Íslendinga sögur*) and *Þættir* as the Literary Representation of a New Social Space". In Clunies Ross, ed. 2000: 203–20.
- . 2005. "Romance (Translated *Riddarasögur*)". In McTurk, ed. 2005: 372–87.
- . 2007. "The Speaking Bodies of Saga Texts". In Quinn, Heslop and Wills, eds. 2007: 13–26.
- Godden, Malcolm, and Michael Lapidge, eds. 1991. *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Godman, Peter. 1987. *Poets and Emperors: Frankish Politics and Carolingian Poetry*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Goeres, Erin Michelle. 2010. "The King is Dead, Long Live the King: Commemoration in the Skaldic Verse of the Viking Age". Diss. Oxford.
- Goetz, Hans-Werner. 1984. *Das Geschichtsbild Ottos von Freising: Ein Beitrag zur historischen Vorstellungswelt und zur Geschichte des 12. Jahrhunderts*. Beihefte zum Archiv für Kulturgeschichte 19. Cologne: Böhlau.
- . 1985. "Die 'Geschichte' im Wissenschaftssystem des Mittelalters". In Franz-Josef Schmale, *Funktionen und Formen mittelalterlicher Geschichtsschreibung*: 165–213. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- . 1992. "Der hochmittelalterliche Geschichtsschreiber und seine Quellen: Zur historiographischen Praxis im Spiegel von Geschichtsverständnis und Geschichtsbewußtsein". *Mlat Jb* 32: 1–18.
- . 1999. *Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsbewusstsein im hohen Mittelalter*. OM 1. Berlin: Akademie Verlag.
- . 2003. "'Konstruktion der Vergangenheit': Geschichtsbewußtsein und 'Fiktionalität' in der hochmittelalterlichen Chronistik, dargestellt am Beispiel der *Annales Palidenses*". In *Von Fakten und Fiktionen: Mittelalterliche Geschichtsdarstellungen und ihre kritische Aufbewahrung*, ed. Johannes Laudage, 225–57. Cologne: Böhlau.
- . 2006. "Textualität, Fiktionalität, Konzeptionalität. Geschichtswissenschaftliche Anmerkungen zur Vorstellungswelt mittelalterlicher Geschichtsschreiber und zur Konstruktion ihrer Texte". *Mlat Jb* 41: 1–22.
- Goffart, Walter. 1988. *The Narrators of Barbarian History (AD 550–800): Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, Bede, and Paul the Deacon*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Gottskálk Jensson. 2004. "The Lost Latin Literature of Medieval Iceland: The Fragments of the *Vita sancti Thorlaci* and Other Evidence". *SO* 79: 150–70.
- Graus, František. 1989. "Troja und trojanische Herkunftssage im Mittelalter". In *Kontinuität und Transformation der Antike im Mittelalter*, ed. Willi Erzgräber: 25–43. Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag.
- Green, Dennis H. 1979. *Irony in the Medieval Romance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 1994. *Medieval Listening and Reading: The Primary Reception of German Literature, 800–1300*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2002a. *The Beginnings of Medieval Romance: Fact and Fiction, 1150–1220*. CSML 47. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2002b. "The *Ludwigslied* and the Battle of Saucourt". In *The Scandinavians from the Vendel Period to the Tenth Century: An Ethnographic Perspective*, ed. Judith Jesch: 281–97. Studies in Historical Archaeoethnology 5. Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer.

- . 2002c. "Was verstehen wir unter Fiktionalität um 1200?". *Literaturwissenschaftliches Jahrbuch im Auftrag der Görres-Gesellschaft* 43: 25–37.
- Green, Judith. 2006. *Henry I: King of England and Duke of Normandy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Grove, Jonathan. 2007. "The Contest of Verse-Making in Old Norse-Icelandic Skaldic Poetry". Diss. Toronto.
- Guðrún Nordal. 1998. *Ethics and Action in Thirteenth-Century Iceland*. VC 11. Odense: Odense University Press.
- . 2000. "The Contemporary Sagas and their Social Context". In Clunies Ross, ed. 2000: 221–41.
- . 2001. *Tools of Literacy: The Role of Skaldic Verse in Icelandic Textual Culture of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Gunnar Karlsson. 1993. "A Century of Research on Icelandic Society". In Faulkes and Perkins, eds. 1993: 15–25.
- . 2000. *Iceland's 1100 Years: History of a Marginal Society*. London: Hurst & Co.
- . 2004. *Goðamenning: Staða og áhrif goðorðsmanna í þjóðveldi Íslendinga*. Reykjavík: Heimskringla.
- Gunnell, Terry. 2005. "Eddic Poetry". In McTurk, ed. 2005: 82–100.
- Hadley, Dawn M. 2006. *The Vikings in England: Settlement, Society and Culture*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Haki Antonsson. 2007. *St. Magnús of Orkney: A Scandinavian Martyr-Cult in Context*. TNW 29. Leiden: Brill.
- Haimeri, Edgar. 1992. *Verständnisperspektiven der eddischen Heldenlieder im 13. Jahrhundert*. GAG 567. Göttingen: Kümmerle.
- . 1993. "Sigurd—ein Held des Mittelalters: Eine textimmanente Interpretation der Jungsigurddichtung". *alvissmál* 2. 81–104.
- Hansen, Jens S. T. 1945. "Observations on Theodoricus Monachus and His History of the Old Norwegian Kings from the End of the XII. Sec.". *SO* 24: 164–80.
- . 1949. "Theodoricus Monachus and European Literature". *SO* 27: 70–127.
- Harris, Joseph. 1972. "Genre and Narrative Structure in some *Íslendinga þættir*". *SS* 44: 1–27.
- . 1975. "Genre in the Saga Literature: A Squib". *SS* 47: 427–35.
- . 1976. "Theme and Genre in Some *Íslendinga þættir*". *SS* 48: 1–28.
- . 1985. "Eddic Poetry". In Clover and Lindow, ed. 1985: 67–156.
- . 1986. "Saga as Historical Novel". In Lindow, Lönnroth and Weber, ed. 1986: 187–219.
- . 1997. "The Prosimetrum of Icelandic Saga and Some Relatives". In *Prosimetrum: Crosscultural Perspectives on Narrative in Prose and Verse*, ed. Joseph Harris and Karl Reichl: 131–63. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer.
- Haubrichs, Wolfgang. 1987. "Veterum regum actus et bella—Zur sog. Heldenliedersammlung Karls des Großen". In *Aspekte der Germanistik. Festschrift für Hans-Friedrich Rosenfeld zum 90. Geburtstag*, ed. Wilhelm Tauber: 17–46. GAG 521. Göttingen: Kümmerle.
- . 1995. *Die Anfänge: Versuche volkssprachlicher Schriftlichkeit im frühen Mittelalter*. 2nd edn. Geschichte der deutschen Literatur von den Anfängen bis zum Beginn der Neuzeit I/1. Tübingen: Niemeyer.
- Haug, Walter. 1997. *Vernacular Literary Theory in the German Middle Ages: The German Tradition, 800–1300, in Its European Context*. Trans. Joanna Catling. CSML 29. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2002. "Geschichte, Fiktion und Wahrheit. Zu den literarischen Spielformen zwischen Faktizität und Phantasie". In Knapp and Niesner, eds. 2002: 115–31.
- . 2003. *Die Wahrheit der Fiktion. Studien zur weltlichen und geistlichen Literatur des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit*. Tübingen: Niemeyer.
- Heinzelmann, Martin. 1994. *Gregor von Tours (538–594): "Zehn Bücher Geschichte": Historiographie und Gesellschaftskonzept im 6. Jahrhundert*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.

- Helle, Knut. 1993. "Norway, 800–1200". In Faulkes and Perkins, eds. 1993: 1–14.
- . 1995. "Part I: Down to 1536". In *Norway: A History from the Vikings to Our Own Times*. Trans. Michael Drake: 3–119. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- . 2003. "The Norwegian Kingdom: Succession Disputes and Consolidation". In Helle, ed. 2003: 369–91.
- Helle, Knut, ed. 2003. *The Cambridge History of Scandinavia*, i: *Prehistory to 1520*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hermann Pálsson. 1999. *Oral Tradition and Saga Writing*. SMS 3. Vienna: Fassbaender.
- Hermann, Pernille. 2007. "Íslendingabók and History". In *Reflections on Old Norse Myths*, ed. Pernille Hermann, Jens Peter Schjødt and Rasmus Trandum Kristensen: 17–32. Studies in Viking and Medieval Scandinavia 1. Turnhout: Brepols.
- . 2009. "Concepts of Memory and Approaches to the Past in Medieval Icelandic Literature". *SS* 81: 287–308.
- Hoefer, Hartmut. *Typologie im Mittelalter: Zur Übertragbarkeit typologischer Interpretation auf weltliche Dichtung*. GAG 54. Göttingen: Kümmerle.
- Hoff, Karin, et al., eds. 2004. *Poetik und Gedächtnis: Festschrift für Heiko Uecker zum 65. Geburtstag*. Beiträge zur Skandinavistik 17. Frankfurt a. M.: Peter Lang.
- Hofmann, Dietrich. 1978–9. "Sagaprosa als Partner von Skaldenstrophen". *MS* 11: 68–71.
- Hudson, Benjamin. 2007. Review of Forte, Oram and Pedersen 2005. *Speculum* 82: 186–8.
- Hughes, Shaun F. D. 1988. "The Battle of Stamford Bridge and the Battle of Bouvines". *SS* 60: 30–76.
- Hunter Blair, Peter. 2003. *An Introduction to Anglo-Saxon England*. 3rd edn revised by Simon Keynes. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Huscroft, Richard. 2009. *The Norman Conquest: A New Introduction*. Harlow: Pearson Longman.
- Hyams, Paul R. 1997. "The End of Feudalism?". *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 27: 655–62.
- . 2002. "Homage and Feudalism: A Judicious Separation". In *Die Gegenwart des Feudalismus*, ed. Natalie Fryde, Pierre Monnet and Otto Gerhard Oexle: 13–49. VMPiG 173. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Innes, Matthew. 1999. "The Classical Tradition in the Carolingian Renaissance: Ninth-Century Encounters with Suetonius". *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 3: 262–82.
- Jackson, Tatjana N. 1984. "On Snorri Sturluson's Creative Activity: The Problem of Writer Intrusion into the Narrative". *ANF* 99: 107–25.
- Jaeger, C. Stephen. 1985. *The Origins of Courtliness: Civilizing Trends and the Formation of Courty Ideals, 939–1210*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- . 2002. *Scholars and Courtiers: Intellectuals and Society in the Medieval West*. CSS 753. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Jakob Benediktsson. 1966–9. "Landnámabók: Some Remarks on Its Value as a Historical Source". *SBVS* 17: 275–92.
- Janni, Pietro, ed. 1988. *Cultura classica e cultura germanica settentrionale*. Quaderni linguistici e filologici 3. Rome: Herder.
- Jentzmik, Peter. 1973. *Zu Möglichkeiten und Grenzen typologischer Exegese in mittelalterlicher Predigt und Dichtung*. GAG 112. Göttingen: Kümmerle.
- Jesch, Judith. 1984. "Hrómundr Gripsson Revisited". *Skandinavistik* 14: 89–105.
- . 1994. "In Praise of Ástríðr Óláfsdóttir". *SBVS* 24: 1–18.
- . 1996. "Norse Historical Traditions and the *Historia Gruffudd vab Kenan*: Magnús Berfoettr and Haraldr hárfagri". In *Gruffudd ap Cynan: A Collaborative Biography*, ed. K. L. Maund: 117–47. Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer.
- . 2004a. "Skaldic Verse and the Roots of History". *Quaestio Insularis* 5: 1–22.
- . 2004b. "Vikings on the European Continent in the Late Viking Age". In Adams and Holmes, ed. 2004: 255–68.

- . 2005. "Skaldic Verse: A Case of Literacy *avant la lettre*?" In *Literacy in Medieval and Early Modern Scandinavian Culture*, ed. Pernille Hermann: 187–210. VC 16. Odense: The University Press of Southern Denmark.
- Jochens, Jenny. 1999. "Late and Peaceful: Iceland's Conversion Through Arbitration in 1000". *Speculum* 74: 621–55.
- Johaneke, Peter. 1987. "König Arthur und die Plantagenets: Über den Zusammenhang von Historiographie und höfischer Epik in mittelalterlicher Propaganda". *FmSt* 21: 346–89.
- . 2002. "Die Wahrheit der mittelalterlichen Historiographen". In Knapp and Niesner, eds. 2002: 9–25.
- Johnsen, Arne Odd. 1939. *Om Theodoricus og hans "Historia de antiquitate regum Norwagiensium"*. Avhandlinger utgit av det Norske Videnskaps-Akademi i Oslo, II. Hist.-Filos. Klasse 3. Oslo: J. Dybwad.
- Jón Jóhannesson. 1974. *A History of the Old Icelandic Commonwealth*. Trans. Haraldur Bessason. UMIS 2. [Winnipeg]: University of Manitoba Press.
- Jón Viðar Sigurðsson. 1999. *Chieftains and Power in the Icelandic Commonwealth*. Trans. Jean Lundskær-Nielsen. VC 12. Odense: Odense University Press.
- . 2007. "Changing Layers of Jurisdiction and the Reshaping of Icelandic Society c. 1220–1350". In *Communities in European History: Representations, Jurisdictions, Conflicts*, ed. Juan Pan-Montojo and Frederik Pedersen: 173–87. Pisa: Pisa University Press.
- Jónas Kristjánsson. 1988. "Sagas and Saints' Lives". In Janni, ed. 1988: 123–45.
- Jørgensen, Jørgen Hojgaard. 1982. "Hagiography and the Icelandic Bishop Sagas". *Peritia* 1: 1–16.
- Jørgensen, Jon Gunnar. 1995. "Snorre Sturlusøns Fortale paa sin Chrønike: Om kildene til opplysningen om *Heimskringlas* forfatter". *Gripla* 9: 45–62.
- Jørgensen, Jon Gunnar, Karsten Friis-Jensen and Else Mundal, eds. 2010. *Saxo og Snorre*. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press.
- Kalinke, Marianne. 1981. *King Arthur North-by-Northwest: The Matière de Bretagne in Old Norse-Icelandic Romances*. BA 37. Copenhagen: C. A. Reitzel.
- . 1984. "*Sigurðar saga jórsalafara*: The Fictionalization of Fact in Morkinskinna". SS 56: 152–67.
- . 1985. "Norse Romance". In Clover and Lindow, ed. 1985: 316–63.
- . 1996. "Scandinavia". In *Medieval Arthurian Literature: A Guide to Recent Research*, ed. Norris J. Lacy: 83–119. New York: Garland.
- Kári Gíslason. 2006. "Reading for Saga Authorship: A Character-Based Approach". *Gripla* 17: 125–52.
- . 2009. "Sweden of the Sagas". In Ney, Williams and Ljungqvist, eds. 2009: 484–90.
- Karlsen, Eспен, and Kyrre Vatsend. 1993. "On Theodoricus Monachus' Use of Late Classical Authors". *CM* 16: 239–64.
- Kaufhold, Martin. 2001. *Europas Norden im Mittelalter: Die Integration Skandinaviens in das christliche Europa (9.–13. Jh.)*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- Keller, Wolfram R. 2008. *Selves and Nations: The Troy Story from England to Sicily in the Middle Ages*. Britannica et Americana 25. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter.
- Kersken, Norbert. 1995. *Geschichtsschreibung im Europa der "nationes": Nationalgeschichtliche Gesamtdarstellungen im Mittelalter*. Münstersche Historische Forschungen 8. Cologne: Böhlau.
- . 2003. "High and Late Medieval National Historiography". In *Historiography in the Middle Ages*, ed. Deborah Mauskopf Deliyannis, 181–216. Leiden: Brill.
- Keynes, Simon. 1998. "Introduction to the 1998 Reprint". In Campbell and Keynes, eds. 1998: [xiii]–[lxxxvii].
- . 2003. "The Power of the Written Word: Alfredian England 871–899". In Reuter, ed. 2003: 175–97.
- Knapp, Fritz Peter, and Manuela Niesner, eds. 2002. *Historisches und fiktionales Erzählen im Mittelalter*. Schriften zur Literaturwissenschaft 19. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot.

- Knirk, James E. 1993. "Old Norwegian Literature". In *A History of Norwegian Literature*, ed. Harald S. Ness: 1–38. HSL 2. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Kolbrún Haraldsdóttir. 1998. "Der Historiker Snorri: Autor oder Kompilator?". In *Snorri Sturluson: Beiträge zu Werk und Rezeption*, ed. by Hans Fix: 97–108. ERGA 18. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Kopár, Lilla. 1997. "Leben und Taten verstorbener Könige: Entstehung literarischer Zeugnisse über das Leben von Óláfr Tryggvason und König Harold II von England nach ihrem (angeblichen) Tod". In *Arbeiten zur Skandinavistik: 13. Arbeitstagung der deutschsprachigen Skandinavistik*, ed. Fritz Paul: 181–8. TUGS 45. Frankfurt a. M.: Peter Lang.
- Körntgen, Ludger. 2001. *Königsherrschaft und Gottes Gnade: Zu Kontext und Funktion sakraler Vorstellungen in Historiographie und Bildzeugnisse der ottonisch-frühsalischen Zeit*. OM 2. Berlin: Akademie Verlag.
- Krag, Claus. 1989. "Norge som odel i Harald Hårfagres ætt". *HT(N)* 68: 288–302.
- . 1991. *Ynglingatal og Ynglingesaga: en studie i historiske kilder*. Studia Humaniora 2. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- . 1998. "Harald Hårdrådes ungdomsår og kongesagaene: forholdet mellom sagaproza, skaldekvad og muntlig tradisjon". *CM* 11: 9–31.
- . 2002. "Myten om Hårfagreætten 'odel': et svar til Knut Dørum". *HT(N)* 81: 381–94.
- . 2003. "The Early Unification of Norway". In Helle, ed. 2003: 184–201.
- Kramarz-Bein, Susanne. 1994. "Zur Darstellung und Bedeutung des Höfischen in der *Konungs skuggsjá*". *CM* 7: 51–86.
- . 1999. "Höfische Unterhaltung und ideologisches Ziel: Das Beispiel der altnorwegischen *Parcevals saga*". In *Die Aktualität der Saga*, ed. Stig Toftgaard Andersen: 63–84. ERGA 21. Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter.
- Kramarz-Bein, Susanne, ed. 2005. *Neue Ansätze in der Mittelalterphilologie—Nye veier i middelalderfilologien*. TUGS 55. Frankfurt a. M.: Peter Lang.
- Kreutzer, Gert. 1994. "Das Bild Harald Schönhars in der atlisländischen Literatur". In Uecker, ed. 1994: 443–61.
- Kuhn, Hans. 1961. "Heldensage vor und außerhalb der Dichtung". In *Zur germanisch-deutschen Heldensage: Sechzehn Aufsätze zum neuen Forschungsstand*, ed. Karl Hauck: 173–94. Wege der Forschung 14. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- . 1976. "Narrative Structures and Historicity in *Heimskringla*". *Parergon* 15: 30–42.
- Laity, K. A. 2004. "Translating Saint as (Vi)King: St. Olaf in the *Heimskringla*". *Viator* 35: 169–202.
- Lange, Gudrun. 1989. *Die Anfänge der isländisch-norwegischen Geschichtsschreibung*. Studia Islandica 47. Reykjavik: Bókaútgáfa Menningarsjóðs.
- Lapidge, Michael. 2003. "Asser's Reading". In Reuter, ed. 2003: 27–47.
- Les relations littéraires Franco-Scandinaves au moyen âge*. 1975. Bibliothèque de la Faculté de Philosophie et Lettres de l'Université de Liège 208. Paris: Les Belles lettres.
- Leyser, Karl. 1979. *Rule and Conflict in an Early Medieval Society: Ottonian Saxony*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Lindow, John, Lars Lönnroth and Gerd Wolfgang Weber, eds. 1986. *Structure and Meaning in Old Norse Literature: New Approaches to Textual Analysis and Literary Criticism*. Odense: Odense University Press.
- Lönnroth, Lars. 1965. *European Sources of Icelandic Saga-Writing: An Essay Based on Previous Studies*. Stockholm: Thule.
- . 1967. "The Noble Heathen: A Theme in the Sagas". *SS* 41: 1–29.
- . 1975a. "Charlemagne, Hrólf kraki, Ólaf Tryggvason: Parallels in the Heroic Tradition". In *Les relations littéraires*: 29–46.
- . 1975b. "The Concept of Genre in Saga Literature". *SS* 47: 419–26.
- . 1976. "Ideology and Structure in *Heimskringla*". *Parergon* 15: 16–29.
- . 1986. "Dómdali's Death and the Myth of Sacral Kingship". In Lindow, Lönnroth and Weber, eds. 1986: 73–93.

- . 2000. "The Baptist and the Saint: Odd Snorrason's View of the Two King Olavs". In Dallapiazza et al., eds. 2000: 257–64.
- Louis-Jensen, Jonna. 1997. "Heimskringla—Et værk af Snorri Sturluson?". *Nordica Bergensia* 14: 230–45.
- Lund, Niels. 1989. "Allies of God or Man? The Viking Expansion in European Perspective". *Viator* 20: 45–59.
- . 1990. "Danish Military Organisation". In *The Battle of Maldon: Fiction and Fact*, ed. Janet Cooper: 109–26. London: Hambledon Press.
- . 2006. "Leding, skjaldekquad og bønder". *HT(D)* 106: 243–52.
- Lunden, Kåre. 1995. "Was There a Norwegian National Identity in the Middle Ages?". *SJH* 20: 19–33.
- Lutz, Angelika. 2000. "Æthelweard's *Chronicon* and Old English Poetry". *ASE* 29: 177–214.
- McDougall, Ian. 1987–8. "Foreigners and Foreign Languages in Medieval Iceland". *SBVS* 22: 180–223.
- McKinnell, John, David Ashurst and Donata Kick, eds. 2006. *The Fantastic in Old Norse/Icelandic Literature: Sagas and the British Isles: Preprint Papers of the 13th International Saga Conference*. 2006. Durham: Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Durham University (the papers are also available online at: <http://www.dur.ac.uk/medieval.sagaconf/sagapps.htm>).
- McKitterick, Rosamond. 2004. *History and Memory in the Carolingian World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2006. *Perceptions of the Past in the Early Middle Ages*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.
- . 2008. *Charlemagne: The Formation of a European Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McTurk, Rory. 1974. "Sacral Kingship in Ancient Scandinavia: A Review of Some Recent Writings". *SBVS* 19: 138–69.
- . 1994. "Scandinavian Sacral Kingship Revisited". *SBVS* 14: 19–32.
- , ed. 2005. *A Companion to Old Norse-Icelandic Literature and Culture*. Blackwell Companions to Literature and Culture 31. Oxford: Blackwell.
- McTurk, Rory, and Andrew Wawn, eds. 1989. *Úr dölum til dala: Guðbrandur Vigfússon Centenary Essays*. Leeds Texts and Monographs, New Series 11. Leeds: University of Leeds.
- Magnús Fjalldal. 2005. *Anglo-Saxon England in Icelandic Medieval Texts*. TONIS 2. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Malmros, Rikke. 1985. "Leding og skjaldekquad: det elvte århundredes nordiske krigsflåder, deres teknologi og organisation og deres placering i samfundet belyst gennem den samtidige fyrstedigtning". *Aarbøger for nordisk oldkyndighed og historie*: 89–139.
- . 2002. "Leiðangr in Old Norse Court Poetry". In *Maritime Warfare in Northern Europe: Technology, Organisation, Logistics and Administration, 500 BC–AD 1500*, ed. Anne Nørgård Jørgensen: 277–86. Publications from the National Museum: Studies in Archaeology and History 6. Copenhagen: The National Museum of Denmark.
- . 2005. "Kongemakt og leding i Norge og Danmark omkring 1100 belyst ud fra den tidlige kristne fyrstedigtning". *HT(D)* 105: 321–80.
- . 2006. "Fyrstedigtningens kildeværdi: en diskussion med Niels Lund". *HT(D)* 106: 253–63.
- Marold, Edith. 1987. "Die norwegische Reichseinigung und die Preislieddichtung". In *Arbeiten zur Skandinavistik: 7. Arbeitstagung der Skandinavisten des deutschen Sprachgebiets*, ed. Ulrich Groenke: 59–93. TUGS 18. Frankfurt a. M.: Peter Lang.
- . 1994. "Der Skalde und sein Publikum". In Uecker, ed. 1994: 462–76.
- . 2005. "Lebendige Skaldendichtung". In Kramarz-Bein, ed. 2005: 247–70.
- Martínez Pizarro, Joaquín. 1981. "An *Eiríks þáttir málspaka*? Some Conjectures on the Source of Saxo's Ericus Disertus". In Friis-Jensen, ed. 1981: 105–20.

- Marritt, Stephen. 2006. "Crowland Abbey and the Provenance of Orderic Vitalis's Scandinavian and Scottish Material". *Notes and Queries* 53: 290–2.
- Matthews, Alastair. Forthcoming. *The Kaiserchronik and Its Literary Side: Narrative Theory and the Literary Text*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Melnikova, Elena. 1996. *The Eastern World of the Vikings: Eight Essays about Scandinavia and Eastern Europe in the Early Middle Ages*. Gothenburg Old Norse Studies 1. Gothenburg: Litteraturvetenskapliga Institutionen, Göteborgs Universitet.
- Melville, Gert. 1982. "Wozu Geschichte schreiben? Stellung und Funktion der Historie im Mittelalter". In *Formen der Geschichtsschreibung*, ed. Reinhart Koselleck, Heinrich Lutz and Jörn Rüsen: 86–146. Beiträge zur Historik 4. Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Gesellschaft.
- Meulengracht Sørensen, Preben. 1988. "Guðrún Gjúkadóttir in Miðjundalr: Zur Aktualität nordischer Heldensage im Island des 13. Jahrhunderts". In *Heldensage und Heldendichtung im Germanischen*, ed. Heinrich Beck: 183–97. ERGA 2. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- . 2001. "The Prosimetrum Form 1: Verses as the Voice of the Past". In Poole, ed. 2001: 172–90.
- Miller, William Ian. 1990. *Bloodtaking and Peacemaking: Feud, Law, and Society in Saga Iceland*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Mitchell, Stephen A. 1991. *Heroic Sagas and Ballads*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- . 2001. "Performance and Norse Poetry: the Hydromel of Praise and the Effluvia of Scorn". *Oral Tradition* 16: 168–202.
- Moberg, Ove. 1940–2. "Olav Haraldssons hemkomst: en historiografisk undersökning". *HT(N)* 32: 545–75.
- Momigliano, Arnaldo. 1963. "Pagan and Christian Historiography in the Fourth Century A. D.". In *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century*, ed. Arnaldo Momigliano: 79–99. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Morales Romero, Eduardo. 2004. *Historia de los vikingos en España: ataques e incursiones contra los reinos cristianos e musulmanes de la Península Ibérica en los siglos IX–XI*. Madrid: Miraguano Ediciones.
- Mortensen, Lars Boje. 1987. "Saxo Grammaticus' View of the Origin of the Danes and his Historiographical Models". *Cahiers de l'Institut du moyen-âge grec et latin (Université de Copenhague)* 55: 169–83.
- . 1995. "Stylistic Choice in a Reborn Genre: The National Histories of Widukind of Corvey and Dudo of St Quentin". In Gatti and Degl'Innocenti, eds. 1995: 77–102.
- . 2000a. "The Anchin Manuscript of *Passio Olavi* (Douai 295), William of Jumièges, and Theodoricus Monachus: New Evidence for Intellectual Relations between Norway and France in the 12th Century". *SO* 75: 165–89.
- . 2000b. "The Nordic Archbishoprics as Literary Centres around 1200". In Friis-Jensen and Skovgaard-Petersen, eds. 2000: 133–57.
- . 2003. "Introduction". In *HN*: 8–47.
- . 2005. "The Language of Geographical Description in Twelfth-Century Scandinavia". *Filologia Mediolatina* 12: 103–21.
- . 2006. "Sanctified Beginnings and Mythopoietic Moments: The First Wave of Writing on the Past in Norway, Denmark, and Hungary, c. 1000–1230". In *The Making of Christian Myths in the Periphery of Latin Christendom*, ed. Lars Boje Mortensen: 247–73. Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press.
- Müller, Jan-Dirk. 2004. "Literarische und andere Spiele: Zum Fiktionalitätsproblem in vor-moderner Literatur". *Poetica* 36: 281–311.
- Mundal, Else. 1994. "Íslendingabók vurdert som bispelstolskrønike". *alvissmál* 3: 63–72.
- . 1997. "Framveksten av den islandske identiteten, dei norske røtene og forholdet til Noreg". *CM* 10: 7–29.
- . 2000. "Den latinspråklege historieskrivinga og den norrøne tradisjonen: ulike teknikkar og ulike krav". In Ekrem, Mortensen and Skovgaard-Petersen, eds. 2000: 9–25.

- Mundal, Else, and Jonas Wellendorf, eds. 2008. *Oral Art Forms and their Passage into Writing*. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press.
- Musset, Lucien. 1975. "L'image de la Scandinavie dans les œuvres Normandes de la période ducale (911–1204)". In *Les relations littéraires*: 193–215.
- Neijmann, Daisy. L., ed. 2006. *A History of Icelandic Literature*. HSL 5. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Nellmann, Eberhard. 1963. *Die Reichsidee in deutschen Dichtungen der Salier- und frühen Stauferzeit: Annolied, Kaiserchronik, Rolandslied, Eraclius*. Philologische Studien und Quellen 16. Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag.
- Nelson, Janet L. 1986. *Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe*. London: Hambledon Press.
- . *The Frankish World, 750–900*. London: Hambledon Press.
- Ney, Agneta, Henrik Williams and Fredrik Charpentier Ljungqvist, eds. 2009. *Á Austrvega. Saga and East Scandinavia: Preprint Papers of the 14th International Saga Conference*, Institutionen för humaniora och samhällsvetenskaps skriftserie 14. Gävle: Gävle University Press (the papers are also available online at: <http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:mbn:se:hig:diva-4837>).
- Obolensky, Dmitri. 1970. "The Byzantine Sources on the Scandinavians in Eastern Europe". In *Varangian Problems: Report on the First International Symposium on the Theme "The Eastern Connections of the Nordic Peoples in the Viking Period and the Early Middle Ages"*, ed. Knud Hannestad: 149–64. Scando-Slavica supplementum 1. Copenhagen: Munksgaard.
- Ohly, Friedrich. 1969. *Sage und Legende in der "Kaiserchronik": Untersuchung über Quellen und Aufbau der Dichtung*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- . 1977a. "Halbbiblische und außerbiblische Typologie". In his *Schriften zur mittelalterlichen Bedeutungsforschung*: 361–400. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- . 1977b. "Synagoge und Ecclesia: Typologisches in mittelalterlicher Dichtung". In his *Schriften zur mittelalterlichen Bedeutungsforschung*: 312–337.
- O'Donoghue, Heather. 2004. *Old Norse-Icelandic Literature: A Short Introduction*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- . 2005. *Skaldic Verse and the Poetics of Saga Narrative*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ólafía Einarisdóttir. 2000. "Absalon and the Norwegian Civil War: Christian Ideology of War and Peace". In Friis-Jensen and Skovgaard-Petersen, eds. 2000: 37–69.
- . 2002. "*Fagrskinna's* forfattetidspunkt: Olaf Haraldsson—Tyskland—Håkon Håkonsson". In *Germanisches Altertum und christliches Mittelalter: Festschrift für Heinz Klingenberg zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Bela Brogyanyi: 51–89. Schriften zur Mediävistik 1. Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovač.
- Orchard, Andy. 1997. *Cassell's Dictionary of Old Norse Myth and Legend*. London: Cassell.
- . 2001. "The Literary Background to the *Encomium Emmae Reginae*". *Journal of Medieval Latin* 11: 156–83.
- Ordbog over det norrøne prosasprog / A Dictionary of Old Norse Prose*. 1995–. Copenhagen: The Arnamagnæan Commission.
- Orning, Hans Jacob. 2008. *Unpredictability and Presence: Norwegian Kingship in the High Middle Ages*. Trans. Alan Crozier. TNW 38. Leiden: Brill.
- Orri Vésteinsson. 1998. "Patterns of Settlement in Iceland: A Study in Prehistory". *SBVS* 25: 1–29.
- . 2000. *The Christianization of Iceland: Priests, Power, and Social Change, 1000–1300*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ortmann, Christa, and Hedda Ragotzky. 1990. "Minnesang als 'Vollzugskunst': Zur spezifischen Struktur literarischen Zeremonialhandelns im Kontext höfischer Repräsentation". In *Höfische Repräsentation: Das Zeremoniell und die Zeichen*, ed. Hedda Ragotzky and Horst Wenzel: 227–57. Tübingen: Niemeyer.

- Pabst, Bernhard. 1994. *Prosimetrum: Tradition und Wandel einer Literaturform zwischen Spätantike und Spätmittelalter*. 2 vols. Ordo 4. Cologne: Böhlau.
- . 1995. "Dudo und die prosimetrische Tradition". In Gatti and Degl'Innocenti, eds. 1995: 103–30.
- Page, R. I. 1987a. "A Most Vile People": *Early English Historians on the Vikings*. Dorothea Coke Memorial Lecture in Northern Studies 1986. London: Viking Society for Northern Research.
- . 1987b. *Runes*. London: British Museum.
- Partner, Nancy. 1977. *Serious Entertainments: The Writing of History in Twelfth-Century England*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Paul, Fritz. 1979. "Historiographische und hagiographische Tendenzen in isländischen Bischofsviten des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts". *Skandinavistik* 9: 36–46.
- . 1982. "Das Fiktionalitätsproblem in der altnordischen Literatur". *ANF* 97: 52–66.
- Perkins, Richard. 1989. "Objects and Oral Traditions in Medieval Iceland". In McTurk and Wawn, eds. 1989: 239–66.
- Pesch, Alexandra. 1996. *Brunaǫld, haugsǫld, kirkjuǫld: Untersuchungen zu den archäologisch überprüfbaren Aussagen in der Heimskringla des Snorri Sturluson*. TUGS 35. Frankfurt a. M.: Peter Lang.
- . 1997. "Wer war Hálfdan svarti? Archäologische Fakten und textkritische Betrachtungen über einen unbekannten König und seine bekannte Bestattung". *FmSt* 31: 70–95.
- Peters, Pamela. 1978. "Skaldic Verses as a Historical Source". *Parergon* 22: 29–37.
- Phelpstead, Carl. 2007. *Holy Vikings: Saints' Lives in the Old Icelandic Kings' Sagas*. Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies 340. Temple: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies.
- Picard, Eve. 1991. *Germanisches Sakralkönigtum? Quellenkritische Studien zur Germania des Tacitus und zur altnordischen Überlieferung*. Skandinavistische Arbeiten 12. Heidelberg: Carl Winter.
- Poole, Russell G. 1987. "Skaldic Verse and Anglo-Saxon History: Some Aspects of the Period 1009–1016". *Speculum* 62: 265–98.
- . 1988. "The Cooperative Principle in Medieval Interpretations of Skaldic Verse: Snorri Sturluson, Þjóðólfr Arnórsson and Eyvindr Skáldaspillir". *JEGP* 87: 159–78.
- . 1991. *Viking Poems on War and Peace*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- . 1993. "Variants and Variability in the Text of Egill's *Höfuðlausn*". In *The Politics of Editing Medieval Texts*, ed. Roberta Frank: 65–105. New York, NY: AMS Press.
- . 2005. "Metre and Metrics". In McTurk, ed. 2005: 265–84.
- . 2007a. "Ekphrasis: Its 'Prolonged Echoes' in Scandinavia". *VMS* 3: 245–67.
- . 2007b. "Myth and Ritual in the *Háleygjatal* of Eyvindr skáldaspillir". In Quinn, Heslop and Wills, eds. 2007: 153–76.
- . 2010. "Non enim possum plorare nec lamenta fundere': *Sonatorrek* in a Tenth-Century Context". In *Laments for the Lost: Medieval Mourning and Elegy*, ed. Jane Tolmie and Jane Toswell: 173–200. Turnhout: Brepols.
- . Forthcoming. "Scholars and Skalds: The Northwards Diffusion of Carolingian Poetic Fashions". *MS*.
- , ed. 2001. *Skaldsagas*. ERGA 27. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Pulsiano, Philip, ed. 1993. *Medieval Scandinavia: An Encyclopedia*. New York: Garland.
- Quinn, Judy, Kate Heslop and Tarrin Wills, eds. 2007. *Learning and Understanding in the Old Norse World: Essays in Honour of Margaret Clunies Ross*. MTCNE 18. Turnhout: Brepols.
- Quinn, Judy, and Emily Lethbridge, eds. 2010. *Creating the Medieval Saga: Versions, Variability and Editorial Interpretations of Old Norse Saga Literature*. VC 18. Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark.
- Rauer, Christine. 2000. *Beowulf and the Dragon: Parallels and Analogues*. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer.

- Reichl, Karl. 2000. *Singing the Past: Turkic and Medieval Heroic Poetry*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Reuter, Timothy. 1996. Review of Reynolds 1994. *EME* 5: 244–5.
- . 2006a. *Medieval Politics and Modern Mentalities*, ed. Janet L. Nelson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2006b. “The Ottonians and Carolingian Tradition”. In Reuter 2006a: 268–83.
- . 2006c. “*Regemque, quem in Francia pene perdidit, in patria magnifice recepit*: Ottonian Ruler Representation in Synchronic and Diachronic Comparison”. In Reuter 2006a: 127–46.
- Reuter, Timothy, ed. 2003. *Alfred the Great*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Reynolds, Susan. 1994. *Fiefs and Vassals: The Medieval Evidence Reinterpreted*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Riis, Thomas. 2006. *Einführung in die “Gesta Danorum” des Saxo Grammaticus*. University of Southern Denmark Studies in History and Social Sciences 276. Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark.
- Roslund, Mats. 2007. *Guests in the House: Cultural Transmission between Slavs and Scandinavians 900 to 1300 AD*. TNW 33. Leiden: Brill.
- Røthe, Gunnhild. 2004. “Møtet mellom europeisk hagiografi og norrøn historieskrivning: En analyse av Hundorp-episoden i *Legendariske saga, Heimskringla* og *Flateyjarbók*”. *HT(N)* 83: 445–60.
- Rowe, Elizabeth Ashman. 1994 [for 1991]. “Historical Invasions / Historiographical Interventions: Snorri Sturluson and the Battle of Stamford Bridge”. *Mediaevalia* 17: 149–76.
- . 2005. *The Development of “Flateyjarbók”: Iceland and the Norwegian Dynastic Crisis of 1389*. VC 15. Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark.
- Rowe, Elizabeth Ashman, and Joseph Harris. 2005. “Short Prose Narrative (*þáttir*)”. in McTurk, ed. 2005: 462–78.
- Sapp, Christopher D. 2000. “Dating *Ynglingatal*—Chronological Metrical Developments in *kviðuháttir*”. *Skandinavistik* 30: 85–98.
- Sawyer, Birgit. 2000. *The Viking-Age Rune-Stones: Custom and Commemoration in Early Medieval Scandinavia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sawyer, Birgit, and Peter H. Sawyer. 1992. “Adam and the Eve of Scandinavian History”. In *The Perception of the Past in Twelfth-Century Europe*, ed. Paul Magdalino: 37–51. London: Hambledon Press.
- . 2004. “The Making of the Scandinavian Kingdoms”. In *Die Suche nach den Ursprüngen: Von der Bedeutung des frühen Mittelalters*, ed. Walter Pohl: 261–9. Forschungen zur Geschichte des Mittelalters 8. Vienna: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- Sawyer, Birgit, Peter H. Sawyer and Ian N. Wood, eds. 1987. *The Christianization of Scandinavia*. Alingsås: Viktoria Bokförlag.
- Sawyer, Peter H. 1982. *Kings and Vikings: Scandinavia and Europe AD 700–1100*. London: Methuen.
- . 2006. “English Influence on the Development of the Norwegian Kingdom”. In *Anglo-Saxons: Studies Presented to Cyril Roy Hart*, ed. Simon Keynes and Alfred P. Smyth: 224–9. Dublin: Four Courts Press.
- Sawyer, Peter H., ed. 1997. *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Vikings*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sayers, William. 1994. “Management of the Celtic Fact in *Landnámabók*”. *SS* 66: 129–53.
- Scardigli, Pierguiseppe, and Fabrizio Raschella. 1989. “A Latin-Icelandic Glossary and Some Remarks on Latin in Medieval Scandinavia”. In *Idee—Gestalt—Geschichte: Studien zur europäischen Kulturtradition: Festschrift Klaus von See*, ed. Gerd Wolfgang Weber: 299–323. Odense: Odense University Press.
- Scharer, Anton. 1996. “The Writing of History and King Alfred’s Court”. *EME* 5: 177–206.

- Schier, Kurt. 1994. "Anfänge und erste Entwicklung der Literatur in Island und Schweden: Wie beginnt Literatur in einer schriftlosen Gesellschaft?". In his *Nordlichter: Ausgewählte Schriften 1960–1992*, ed. Ulrike Strerath-Bolz, Stefanie Würth and Sibylle Geberl: 210–65. Munich: Diederichs.
- Schmale, Franz-Josef. 1985. *Funktionen und Formen mittelalterlicher Geschichtsschreibung*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- Scholz, Birgit. 2000. *Von der Chronistik zur modernen Geschichtswissenschaft: die Warägerfrage in der russischen, deutschen und schwedischen Historiographie*. Veröffentlichungen des Osteuropa-Instituts München: Reihe Forschungen zum Ostseeraum 5. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- Schreiner, Klaus. 1986. "‘Hof’ (*curia*) und 'höfische Lebensführung' (*vita curialis*) als Herausforderung an die christliche Theologie und Frömmigkeit". In *Höfische Literatur, Hofgesellschaft, höfische Lebensformen um 1200*, ed. Gert Kaiser and Jan-Dirk Müller: 69–138. *Studia Humaniora* 6. Düsseldorf: Droste.
- Schröder, Werner. 1977. "Zum Typologie-Begriff und Typologie-Verständnis in der mediävistischen Literaturwissenschaft". In *The Epic in Medieval Society: Aesthetic and Moral Values*, ed. Harald Scholler: 64–85. Tübingen: Niemeyer.
- Scott, Forrest S. 1952. "Earl Waltheof of Northumbria". *Archaeologia Aeliana, Series 4* 30: 149–215.
- . 1953–7. "Valþjófr jarl: An English Earl in Icelandic Sources". *SBVS* 14: 78–94.
- Scragg, Donald G. 2003. "A Reading of *Brunanburh*". In *Unlocking the Wordhoard: Anglo-Saxon Studies in Memory of Edward B. Irving, Jr.*, ed. Katherine O'Brien O'Keefe and Mark C. Amodio: 109–22. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- von See, Klaus. 1976. "Hastings, Stiklastaðir und Langemarck: Zur Überlieferung vom Vortrag heroischer Lieder", *Germanisch-romanische Monatsschrift* 57 [n. F. 26]: 1–12.
- . 1977. "Skaldenstrophe und Sagaprosa: Ein Beitrag zum Problem der mündlichen Überlieferung in der altnordischen Literatur". *MS* 10: 58–82.
- . 1981. "Mündliche Prosa und Skaldendichtung: Mit einem Exkurs über Skaldensagas und Trobadorbographien". *MS* 11: 82–91.
- . 1999. *Europa und der Norden im Mittelalter*. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter.
- von See, Klaus, et al. 1997. *Kommentar zu den Liedern der Edda*, ii: *Götterlieder* (*Skírnismál, Hárbarðslíð, Hymiskviða, Lokasenna, Prymskviða*). Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter.
- . 2000. *Kommentar zu den Liedern der Edda*, iii: *Götterlieder* (*Völundarkviða, Alvíssmál, Baldrs draumar, Rigspula, Hyndluljóð, Grottasǫngr*). Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter.
- . 2004. *Kommentar zu den Liedern der Edda*, iv: *Heldenlieder* (*Helgakviða Hundingsbana I, Helgakviða Hjörvarðssonar, Helgakviða Hundingsbana II*). Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter.
- . 2006. *Kommentar zu den Liedern der Edda*, v: *Heldenlieder* (*Frá dauða Sinfjötla, Gríppismál, Reginsmál, Fáfnismál, Sigdrífumál*). Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter.
- . 2009. *Kommentar zu den Liedern der Edda*, vi: *Heldenlieder* (*Brot af Sigurðarkviðu, Guðrúnarkviða, Sigurðarkviða in skamma, Helreið Brynhildar, Dráp Niflungar, Guðrúnarkviða II, Guðrúnarkviða III, Oddrúnargrátr, Strophenbruchstücke aus der Völunga saga*). Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter.
- Sigfús Blöndal and Benedikt S. Benedikz. 1978. *The Varangians of Byzantium*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Simek, Rudolf. 1990. *Altnordische Kosmographie: Studien und Quellen zu Weltbild und Weltbeschreibung in Norwegen und Island vom 12. bis zum 14. Jahrhundert*. ERGA 4. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- . 1995. *Lexikon der altnordischen Mythologie*. 2nd edn. KT 368. Stuttgart: Alfred Kröner.
- . 2002. "Der lange Weg von Troja nach Grönland: Zu den Quellen der gelehrten Urgeschichte in Island". In *Germanisches Altertum und christliches Mittelalter: Festschrift*

- für Heinz Klingenberg zum 65. Geburtstag. ed. Bela Brogyanyi, 315–27. Schriften zur Mediävistik 1. Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovač.
- . 2009. "The Medieval Icelandic World View and the Theory of Two Cultures". *Gripla* 20: 183–98.
- Simek, Rudolf, and Hermann Pálsson. 2006. *Lexikon der altnordischen Literatur*. 2nd edn. KT 490. Stuttgart: Alfred Kröner.
- Simek, Rudolf, and Ulrike Engel, eds. 2004. *Vikings on the Rhine: Recent Research on Early Medieval Relations between the Rhinelands and Scandinavia*. SMS 11. Vienna: Fassbaender.
- Simon, Gertrud. 1958. "Untersuchungen zur Topik der Widmungsbriefe mittelalterlicher Geschichtsschreiber bis zum Ende des 12 Jahrhunderts: Erster Teil". *AD* 4: 52–119.
- . 1959–60. "Untersuchungen zur Topik der Widmungsbriefe mittelalterlicher Geschichtsschreiber bis zum Ende des 12 Jahrhunderts: Zweiter Teil". *AD* 5–6: 73–153.
- Spurkland, Terje. 2005. *Norwegian Runes and Runic Inscriptions*. Trans. Betsy van der Hoek. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press.
- Steinsland, Gro. 1991. *Det hellige bryllup og norrøn kongeideologi: en analyse av hireogamy-myten i Skírnismál, Ynglingatal, Háleygjatal og Hyndluljóð*. Oslo: Solum.
- . 2000. *Den hellige kongen: om religion og herskermakt fra vikingtid til middelalder*. Oslo: Pax forlag.
- Sundqvist, Olof. 2005. "Aspects of Rulership Ideology in Early Scandinavia—with Particular Reference to the Skaldic Poem *Ynglingatal*". In Erkens, ed. 2005: 87–124.
- Sváva Jakobsdóttir. 2002. "Gunnlöð and the Precious Mead". In *The Poetic Edda: Essays on Old Norse Mythology*, ed. Paul Acker and Carolyne Larrington: 17–57. New York: Routledge.
- Sverrir Jakobsson. 1999. "Defining a Nation: Popular and Public Identity in the Middle Ages". *SJH* 24: 91–101.
- . 2002. "'Erindringen om en mægtig Personlighed'. Den norsk-islandske tradisjon om Harald Hårfagre i et kildekritisk perspektiv". *HT(N)* 81: 213–30.
- . 2005. *Við og veröldin: Heimsmynd Íslendinga 900–1400*. Reykjavik: Háskólaútgáfan.
- . 2006. "On the Road to Paradise: 'Austrvegr' in the Icelandic Imagination". In McKinnell, Ashurst and Kick, eds. 2006: 935–43.
- . 2009. "The Process of State-Formation in Medieval Iceland". *Viator* 40: 151–70.
- Sverrir Tómasson. 1988. *Formálar íslenskra sagnaritara á miðöldum: Rannsókn bókmennta-hefðar*. Stofnun Árna Magnússonar Rit 33. Reykjavik: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar.
- . 1989. "'söguljóð, skrök, háð': Snorri Sturluson's Attitude to Poetry". In McTurk and Wawn, eds. 1989: 317–27.
- . 2002. "Konungs lof: Noregs konunga tal í Flateyjarbók". *Skírnir* 176: 257–67.
- . 2006. "The Middle Ages: Old Icelandic Prose". In Neijmann, ed. 2006: 64–173.
- Syrett, Martin. 2004. *Scandinavian History in the Viking Age: A Select Bibliography*. 3rd edn. ASNC Guides, Texts and Studies 2. Cambridge: Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic, University of Cambridge (available for download as a pdf file at <http://www.asnc.cam.ac.uk/resources/research/gts2-VikBibl2004.pdf>).
- Szabó, Thomas. 1990. "Der mittelalterliche Hof zwischen Kritik und Idealisierung". In Fleckenstein, ed. 1990: 360–91.
- Thomson, Rodney M. 2003. *William of Malmesbury*. 2nd edn. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press.
- Thomson, Rodney M., and Michael Winterbottom. 1999. *William of Malmesbury: Gesta regum Anglorum—The History of the English Kings*, ii: *General Introduction and Commentary*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Torfi H. Tulinius. 2000. "The Matter of the North: Fiction and Uncertain Identities in Thirteenth-Century Iceland". In Clunies Ross, ed. 2000: 143–65.
- . 2002. *The Matter of the North: The Rise of Literary Fiction in Thirteenth-Century Iceland*. Trans. Randi C. Eldevik. VC 13. Odense: Odense University Press.

- . 2009. "The Self as Other: Iceland and Christian Europe in the Middle Ages". *Gripla* 20: 199–216.
- Townend, Matthew. 2000. "Pre-Cnut Praise Poetry in Viking Age England". *Review of English Studies* 51: 349–70.
- . 2001. "Norse Poets and English Kings: Skaldic Performance in Anglo-Saxon England". *Offa* 58: 269–75.
- . 2002a. "Contextualising the *Knútsdrápur*: Skaldic Praise-Poetry at the Court of Cnut". *ASE* 30: 145–79.
- . 2002b. *Language and History in Viking Age England: Linguistic Relations between Speakers of Old Norse and Old English*. SEM 6. Turnhout: Brepols.
- . 2003. "Whatever Happened to York Viking Poetry? Memory, Tradition and the Transmission of Skaldic Verse". *SBVS* 27: 48–90.
- . 2005. "Knútr and the Cult of St Óláfr: Poetry and Patronage in Eleventh-Century Norway and England". *VMS* 1: 251–79.
- Toy, John. 2009. *English Saints in the Medieval Liturgies of Scandinavian Churches*. Henry Bradshaw Society Subsidia 6. London: Henry Bradshaw Society.
- Tranter, Stephen. 1987. "*Sturlunga saga*": *The Rôle of the Creative Compiler*. European University Studies, Series 1: German Language and Literature 941. Frankfurt a. M.: Peter Lang.
- Turville-Petre, Gabriel. 1953. *Origins of Icelandic Literature*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- . 1968. *Haraldr the Hard-Ruler and his Poets*. Dorothea Coke Memorial Lecture in Northern Studies 1966. London: H. K. Lewis.
- Tveito, Olav, "Olav Haraldssons unge år og relasjonen til engelsk kongemakt: Momenter til et *crux interpretum*". *CM* 21: 158–81.
- Uecker, Heiko. 2004. *Geschichte der altnordischen Literatur*. RUB 17647. Stuttgart: Reclam.
- . 2005. "Geschichte—Erinnerung—Saga". In Kramarz-Bein, ed. 2005: 71–9.
- , ed. 1994. *Studien zum Altgermanischen: Festschrift für Heinrich Beck*. ERGA 11. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Úlfar Bragason. 2005. "Sagas of Contemporary History (*Sturlunga saga*): Texts and Research". In McTurk, ed. 2005: 427–46.
- Urbańczyk, Przemysław. 2010. "The Not-Yet-Fully-Welcome 'Guests in the House'", *SJH* 35: 330–44.
- Van Houts, Elisabeth. 1983. "Scandinavian Influence in Norman Literature of the Eleventh Century". *Proceedings of the Battle Conference* 6: 106–21.
- . 1999. *Memory and Gender in Medieval Europe, 900–1200*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.
- . 2003. "Historical Writing". In *A Companion to the Anglo-Norman World*, ed. Christopher Harper-Bill and Elisabeth Van Houts: 103–21. Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer.
- Vanderputten, Stephen. 2001. "Typology of Medieval Historiography Reconsidered: A Social Re-Interpretation of Monastic Annals, Chronicles and *Gesta*", *Historical Social Research* 26: 141–78.
- Vansina, Jan. 1985. *Oral Tradition as History*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Vésteinn Ólason. 1998. *Dialogues with the Viking Age: Narration and Representation in the Sagas of the Icelanders*. Trans. Andrew Wawn. Reykjavik: Heimskringla.
- . 2005. "Family Sagas". In McTurk, ed. 2005: 101–18.
- . 2006. "The Middle Ages: Old Icelandic Verse". In Neijmann, ed. 2006: 1–64.
- . 2007. "The Icelandic Saga as a Kind of Literature with Special Reference to its Representation of Reality". In Quinn, Heslop and Wills, eds. 2007: 27–47.
- Wanner, Kevin J. 2006. "*At smyrja konung til veldis*: Royal Legitimation in Snorri Sturluson's *Magnúss saga Erlingssonar*". *SBVS* 30: 5–38.
- . 2008. *Snorri Sturluson and the "Edda": The Conversion of Cultural Capital in Medieval Scandinavia*. TONIS 4. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Ward, John O. 2000. "The Monastic Historiographical Impulse c. 1000–1260: A Re-Assessment". In *Historia: The Concept and Genres in the Middle Ages*, ed. Tuomas M. S. Lehtonen and Päivi Mehtonen: 71–100. Helsinki: Societas Scientiarum Fennica.

- . 2002. "From Chronicle and History to Satire, Travelogue and *Sermo*: The Decline of the Monastic Chronicle in Twelfth and Thirteenth Century Europe". In *The Medieval Chronicle II*, ed. Erik Kooper: 268–80. Amsterdam: Rodopi.
- Waßenhoven, Dominik. 2006. *Skandinavien unterwegs in Europa (1000–1250): Untersuchungen zu Mobilität und Kulturtransfer auf prosopographischer Grundlage*. EM 8. Berlin: Akademie Verlag.
- Weber, Gerd Wolfgang. 1981. "Irreligiosität und Heidenzeitalter: Zum Mythencharakter der altisländischen Literatur". In Dronke et al., eds. 1981: 474–505.
- . 1986. "The Decadence of Feudal Myth—Towards a Theory of *riddarasaga* and Romance". In Lindow, Lönnroth and Weber, eds. 1986: 415–54.
- . 1987. "Intellegere historiam: Typological Perspectives of Nordic Prehistory (in Snorri, Saxo, Widukind and others)". In *Tradition og historieskrivning: kilderne til Nordens aldste historie*, ed. Kirsten Hastrup and Preben Meulengracht Sørensen: 95–141. Acta Jutlandica 63/2. Århus: Århus universitetsforlag.
- . 1994. "Zu Snorri Sturlusons Ausschöpfung der Skaldendichtung als historischer Quelle: *Glymdrápa* Str. 8 als methodologisches problem". In Uecker, ed. 1994: 677–85.
- Werner, Karl Ferdinand. 1987. "Gott, Herrscher und Historiograph: Der Geschichtsschreiber als Interpret des Wirken Gottes in der Welt und Ratgeber der Könige (4. bis 12. Jahrhundert)". In *Deus qui mvttat tempora: Menschen und Institutionen im Wandel des Mittelalters: Festschrift für Alfons Becher zu seinem fünfundsiebzigsten Geburtstag*, ed. Ernst Dieter Hehl: 1–31. Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag.
- Wetzstein, Thomas. 2007. Review of Waßenhoven 2006, published online on H-Soz-u-Kult at <http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/rezensionen/id=8873> (accessed on 13 September 2009).
- Whaley, Diana. 1987. "The Miracles of S. Olaf in Snorri's *Heimskringla*". In *Proceedings of the Tenth Viking Congress, Larkollen, Norway, 1985*, ed. James E. Knirk: 325–42. Universitetes oldsaksamlings skrifter, ny rekke 9. Oslo: Universitetes Oldsaksamling.
- . 1991. *Heimskringla: An Introduction*. VSNR TS 8. London: Viking Society for Northern Research.
- . 1993a. "The Kings' Sagas". In Faulkes and Perkins, eds. 1993: 43–64.
- . 1993b. "Nicknames and Narratives in the Sagas". *ANF* 108: 122–46.
- . 1993c. "Skalds and Situational Verses in *Heimskringla*". In Wolf, ed. 1993: 245–66.
- . 1993d. Review of Krag 1991. *SBVS* 23: 511–15.
- . 2000. "A Useful Past: Historical Writing in Medieval Iceland". In Clunies Ross, ed. 2000: 161–202.
- . 2001. "Representations of the Skalds in the Sagas 1: Social and Professional Relations". In Poole, ed. 2001: 285–308.
- . 2005. "Skaldic Poetry". In McTurk, ed. 2005: 479–502.
- . 2007. "Reconstructing Skaldic Encomia: Discourse Features in Þjóðólfr's 'Magnús Verses'". In Quinn, Heslop and Wills, eds. 2007: 75–101.
- White, Paul A. 1999. "The Latin Men: The Norman Sources of Scandinavian Kings' Sagas". *JEGP* 98: 157–69.
- . 2005. *Non-Native Sources for the Scandinavian Kings' Sagas*. Studies in Medieval History and Culture 34. New York: Routledge.
- White, Stephen D. 1997. Review of Reynolds 1994. *Law and History Review* 15: 349–55.
- Wickham, Chris. 2009. *The Inheritance of Rome: A History of Europe from 400 to 1000*. London: Allen Lane.
- Williams, Gareth. 2001. "Hákon Aðalsteins fóstri: Aspects of Anglo-Saxon Kingship in Tenth-Century Norway". In *The North Sea World in the Middle Ages: Studies in the Cultural History of North-Western Europe*, ed. Thomas R. Liszka and Lorna E. M. Walker: 108–26. Dublin: Four Courts Press.
- Wilson, David M. 2008. *The Vikings in the Isle of Man*. Gylling: Aarhus universitetsforlag.
- Wolf, Alois. 2002. "Zum Problem der literarischen Fiktion in Sagas". In Knapp and Niesner, eds. 2002: 73–89.

- . 2005. "Germanisches Sakralkönigtum? Zum Befund volkssprachlicher Dichtungen des Mittelalters". In Erkens, ed. 2005: 141–60.
- Wolf, Alois, ed. 1993. *Snorri Sturluson: Kolloquium anlässlich der 750. Wiederkehr seines Todestages*. ScriptOralia 51. Tübingen: Gunter Narr.
- Wolf, Kirsten. 2001. "Gregory's Influence on Old-Norse Icelandic Religious Literature". In Bremmer, Dekker and Johnson, eds. 2001: 255–74.
- Wood, Susan. 2006. *The Proprietary Church in the Medieval West*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wormald, Patrick. 1978. "Bede, *Beowulf*, and the Conversion of the Anglo-Saxon Aristocracy". In *Bede and Anglo-Saxon England*. ed. Robert T. Farrell: 32–95. British Archaeological Reports 46. London: British Archaeological Reports.
- . 1991. "Anglo-Saxon Society and Its Literature". In Godden and Lapidge, ed. 1991: 1–22.
- Würth, Stefanie. 1991. *Elemente des Erzählens: Die þættir der Flateyjarbók*, Beiträge zur nordischen Philologie 20. Basel: Helbing & Lichtenhahn.
- . 1998. *Der Antikenroman in der isländischen Literatur des Mittelalters: eine Untersuchung zur Übersetzung und Rezeption lateinischer Literatur im Norden*. Basel: Helbing & Lichtenhahn.
- . 2005. "Historiography and Pseudo-History". In McTurk, ed. 2005: 155–72.
- . 2006. "The Common Transmission of *Trójumanna saga* and *Breta sögur*". In *Beatus Vir: Studies in Early English and Norse Manuscripts in Memory of Phillip Pulsiano*, ed. A. N. Doane and Kirsten Wolf: 297–328. Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies 319. Tempe, Arizona: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies.
- . 2007. "Skaldic Poetry and Performance". In Quinn, Heslop and Wills, eds. 2007: 263–81.
- Yeandle, David N. 1989. "The *Ludwigslied*: King, Church, and Context". In Flood and Yeandle, eds. 1989: 18–79.
- Zernack, Julia. 1998. "Vorläufer und Vollender: Olaf Tryggvason und Olaf der Heilige im Geschichtsdenken des Oddr Snorrason munkr". *ANF* 113: 77–95.
- Zettel, Horst. 1977. *Das Bild der Normannen und der Normanneneinfälle in westfränkischen, ostfränkischen und angelsächsischen Quellen des 8. bis 11. Jahrhunderts*. Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag.
- Þorbjörg Helgadóttir. 1996. "On the Sources and Composition of *Rómverja saga*". *SBVS* 24: 203–20.

CONCORDANCE OF CITED PASSAGES FROM THE 1932 AND
2011 EDITIONS OF *MORKINSKINNA*

After the present work had already been completed, a new edition of *Morkinskinna* was released: Ármann Jakobsson and Þórður Ingi Guðjónsson, eds. 2011. *Morkinskinna*. 2 vols. ÍF 23. Reykjavík: Hið íslenska fornritafélag. This edition supersedes that of Finnur Jónsson cited in the text above as *Msk*; although it was too late to change the references in the text, a concordance of page numbers of all cited passages is given below to enable readers of the present work to refer to what will be the standard edition of this text for the foreseeable future.

<i>Msk</i> 1932: 59	<i>Msk</i> 2011 I: 86–7
<i>Msk</i> 1932: 60	<i>Msk</i> 2011 I: 89
<i>Msk</i> 1932: 64	<i>Msk</i> 2011 I: 93–4
<i>Msk</i> 1932: 65–6	<i>Msk</i> 2011 I: 96
<i>Msk</i> 1932: 69–72	<i>Msk</i> 2011 I: 99–101
<i>Msk</i> 1932: 73–6	<i>Msk</i> 2011 I: 102–4
<i>Msk</i> 1932: 78–9	<i>Msk</i> 2011 I: 106–8
<i>Msk</i> 1932: 148–55	<i>Msk</i> 2011 I: 181–7
<i>Msk</i> 1932: 199–200	<i>Msk</i> 2011 I: 235–7
<i>Msk</i> 1932: 262	<i>Msk</i> 2011 I: 300
<i>Msk</i> 1932: 264	<i>Msk</i> 2011 I: 302
<i>Msk</i> 1932: 266–7	<i>Msk</i> 2011 I: 304–6
<i>Msk</i> 1932: 274	<i>Msk</i> 2011 I: 314
<i>Msk</i> 1932: 283–4	<i>Msk</i> 2011 I: 326–7
<i>Msk</i> 1932: 285	<i>Msk</i> 2011 I: 328–9
<i>Msk</i> 1932: 323–6	<i>Msk</i> 2011 II: 53–6
<i>Msk</i> 1932: 326	<i>Msk</i> 2011 II: 56
<i>Msk</i> 1932: 348	<i>Msk</i> 2011 II: 96
<i>Msk</i> 1932: 350–1	<i>Msk</i> 2011 II: 98
<i>Msk</i> 1932: 398–9	<i>Msk</i> 2011 II: 150–1
<i>Msk</i> 1932: 418	<i>Msk</i> 2011 II: 185

INDEX OF MODERN SCHOLARS CITED

This index lists all the authors of modern works of scholarship that have been cited above, but excludes editors and translators of texts, as well as editors of volumes of essays of which only individual essays, but not the volume as a whole, are referred to. As in the bibliography, Icelandic scholars are cited by their given name, not the patronymic or surname.

- Abram, Christopher 16 n. 54, 47–9, 150
n. 153, 175 n. 182, 195 n. 56
- Abrams, Lesley 150 n. 153
- Adolf Friðriksson 5 n. 13, 77 n. 148
- Almqvist, Bo 115 n. 19
- Amory, Fredric 120 n. 38, 125, 126 n. 52
- Andersson, Theodore M. 2 n. 7, 9 n. 29,
22 n. 65, 50 n. 75, 51 n. 76, 52 n. 81, 78
n. 150, 210
on *Heimskringla* 54 n. 85, 56 nn. 89;
90, 180–1, 187, 193 n. 51
on *Morkinskinna* 14, 15 n. 49, 47 n. 65,
50 nn. 74, 56 n. 90, 82 n. 160, 83 n. 161,
115 n. 20, 129 n. 60, 142 n. 113, 165
n. 168, 180–1, 187
on oral tradition 54 n. 85, 56 n. 89, 82
n. 160, 81 n. 158, 85–7, 132 n. 73
on sagas in literary history 19 n. 60,
89 n. 175, 142 n. 113, 143 n. 122, 187,
199–200
on sagas of the two Óláfrs 8 n. 27, 45,
111 n. 1, 132 n. 73, 143 n. 122
on textual relationships between
sagas 11 n. 35, 13 n. 43
on *Ynglingatal* 30 nn. 14; 15
- Ármann Jakobsson 2 n. 7, 134–5, 141, 142
n. 115, 180, 185–7, 194 n. 55
on *Morkinskinna* 14, 180–5, 192, 193
n. 49
- Assmann, Jan 62–3
- Auerbach, Erich 136 n. 90, 178 n. 4
- Aurell, Martin 183 n. 28
- Avis, Robert 199 n. 69
- Bagge, Sverre 8 n. 27, 10 n. 32, 13 n. 44, 22
n. 67, 43 n. 53, 83 n. 161, 97, 99, 140
n. 101, 183 n. 28
on the conversion of Norway 7 n. 24
on *Heimskringla* 3 n. 8, 16 n. 54, 135–7,
179–80, 181
on Theodoricus 112 n. 2
- Bandle, Oskar 64 n. 109, 87
- Bandlien, Bjørn 120 n. 38
- Barnes, Geraldine 182 n. 26, 183 n. 28,
184 n. 29
- Battista, Simonetta 143 n. 122
- Baumann, Richard C. 36 n. 28
- Baxter, Stephen 120 n. 39
- Beck, Heinrich 31 n. 17, 66 n. 111
- Bein, Thomas 37 n. 30
- Benedikt S. Benedikz 22 n. 67, 33, 72–4,
116 n. 30
- Berger, Alan 16
- Bergsveinn Birgisson 58 n. 95
- Beumann, Helmut 136 n. 90
- Beyschlag, Siegfried 10 n. 33, 70–2, 143
n. 124, 179
- Bibire, Paul 64 n. 109, 100 n. 200, 198
n. 67
- Bjarni Einarsson 88 n. 173
- Bjarni Guðnason 70–1 n. 128, 132 n. 75
- Bolton, Timothy 2 n. 2, 129 n. 61, 130
n. 66
- Bostock, J. Knight 66 n. 111
- Boulhosa, Patricia Pires 16, 150 n. 152,
188, 198, 201 n. 73
- Bourdieu, Pierre 35
- Bowden, Sarah 143 n. 120
- Brink, Stefan 210
- Bullough, Donald A. 37 n. 31
- Bumke, Joachim 183 n. 28
- Byock, Jesse L. 7 n. 24, 14 n. 45, 19 n. 60,
144 n. 127
- Caille, Jacqueline 118 n. 31
- Carpenter, David 123 n. 45
- Cheyette, Fredric L. 118 n. 31, 183 n. 28
- Christiansen, Eric A. 23 n. 68, 39 n. 38,
97, 98, 99, 125 n. 51, 150 n. 152, 210
on Norwegian identity 43 n. 53
on sacral kingship 31 n. 17
on *Ynglingatal* 27 n. 9
- Ciklamini, Marlene 16 n. 54
- Cleasby, Richard 29 n. 11

- Clover, Carol J. 19 n. 60, 140 n. 102, 210
 Clunies Ross, Margaret 16 n. 54, 147
 n. 142, 175 n. 182, 193 n. 50, 210
 on the ethnicity of poets 76 n. 144, 77
 n. 146, 80–1, 82 n. 159, 192
 on the Latin background to Icelandic
 literature 140, 141 nn. 104; 108, 145
 n. 129, 150
 on skalds in society 36 n. 28, 37 n. 29
 on sources of skaldic verse 117–18 n. 31
 on the use and transmission of verse
 19 n. 59, 56 n. 89
 Cochelin, Isabelle 144 n. 126
 Colbert, David 2 n. 2
 Cormack, Margaret 8 n. 27, 16, 117 n. 31,
 143 n. 121, 148, 193 n. 52
 Coupland, Simon 22 n. 65
 Coviaux, Stéphane 136, 137 n. 91, 148
 n. 151
 Crook, Eugene J. 143 n. 121
- Danielsson, Tommy 16, 19 n. 60, 61 n. 100,
 71 n. 130, 85 n. 164, 86–7, 140 n. 102
 Del Zotto, Carla 143 n. 122
 Driscoll, Matthew James 11 n. 36, 12 n. 41
 Dronke, Peter 21 n. 63, 37 n. 30, 118 n. 31,
 141 n. 112, 190 n. 42
 Dronke, Ursula 141 n. 112, 190 n. 42
 Duby, Georges 183 n. 28
 Duczko, Władysław 22 n. 67
 Duggan, Joseph P. 65 n. 109
 Duke, Siân 4 n. 11, 178 n. 3
 Dumville, David N. 22 n. 66, 68 n. 116
 Düwel, Klaus 1 n. 1
 Dørum, Knut 67 n. 113
- Ebel, Else 150 n. 152
 Ekrem, Inger 111 n. 1, 118, 210
 Eldevik, Randi 147 n. 141, 196 n. 62
 Ellis Davidson, H. R. 22 n. 67, 72 n. 133,
 140 n. 103, 149 n. 152
 Engel, Ulrike 149
- Faulkes, Anthony 141 n. 112, 197 n. 63
 Fell, Christine 33 n. 20
 Fentress, James 197 n. 65
 Fidjestøl, Bjarne 8 n. 27, 19 n. 59, 21
 n. 63, 47, 49 n. 71, 69 n. 124, 72 n. 132, 88
 n. 173, 143 n. 122
 Finlay, Alison 9 n. 30, 15 nn. 51; 52, 50
 n. 74, 118 n. 31, 129 n. 64, 140 n. 102
 Fleckenstein, Josef 183 n. 28
 Fleischman, Suzanne 65 n. 109
 Foerster, Thomas 8 n. 27, 22 n. 66, 111
 n. 1, 112 n. 2, 132 n. 75, 133 n. 77, 137 n. 92
- Foote, Peter G. 61 n. 100, 117 n. 31, 131
 n. 70, 149 n. 152, 179 n. 8, 210
 on hagiography 143 n. 121, 146 n. 140,
 193 n. 52
 Forte, Angelo 149–50 n. 152
 Fouracre, Paul 66 n. 111
 Frank, Roberta 18–19 n. 59, 36 n. 28, 130
 n. 67, 175 n. 182
 Franklin, Simon 22 n. 67
 Freeman, Edward A. 120 n. 39, 121 n. 41,
 124 nn. 48; 49, 129 n. 61
 Friis-Jensen, Karsten 126 n. 53, 132 n. 75,
 133 n. 77, 148 n. 151
 Fuglesang, Signe Horn 118 n. 31
- Gade, Kari Ellen 19 n. 59, 56 n. 90, 68
 n. 118, 79 n. 153, 129 n. 60, 209, 210
 on Anglo-Norman sources of the
 sagas 114–15, 119–20, 125, 126 n. 52
 on dating skaldic verse 47, 58–9
 on the function of skaldic verse 37–8,
 190
 on Giffarðr 51
 on *Morkinskinna* 14, 15 n. 49, 50
 nn. 74; 75, 56 n. 90, 82 n. 160, 83
 n. 161, 142 n. 113, 165 n. 168, 180 n. 14,
 181 n. 17, 182 n. 22
 on Tostig Godwinsson 121–2
 on the transmission of skaldic verse
 82 nn. 159, 77–8
 Garrison, Mary 37 n. 31, 136 n. 90
 Gelsinger, Bruce E. 114
 Ghosh, Shami 30 n. 13, 63 n. 105, 130
 n. 67, 133 n. 78, 148 n. 148, 195 n. 56, 197
 n. 63
 Gísli Sigurðsson 19 n. 60, 85 n. 164,
 86–7
 Glauser, Jürg 64 n. 109, 86 n. 168, 182
 n. 26, 195 n. 58
 Godman, Peter 37 n. 31
 Goeres, Erin Michelle 25 n. 1, 30 n. 14, 31
 n. 16, 40 n. 42, 93 nn. 183; 185, 98 n. 192,
 126 n. 55
 Goetz, Hans-Werner 64–5, 87 n. 171, 134,
 142 n. 120, 151 n. 155
 Goffart, Walter 136 n. 90
 Gottskálk Jónsson 144–5 n. 129
 Graus, František 197 n. 63
 Green, Dennis H. 65 n. 109, 66 n. 111, 147
 n. 144, 183 n. 28, 198 n. 67
 Green, Judith 123 n. 45
 Grove, Jonathan 20 n. 61, 35, 36 n. 29
 Guðrún Nordal 13 n. 44, 20 n. 61, 35
 n. 23, 38, 79 n. 153, 117 n. 31, 141 n. 110,
 147, 193 n. 52

- Gunnar Karlsson 14 n. 45, 15 n. 53, 141,
144 n. 127, 145 n. 129, 187 n. 34, 210
Gunnell, Terry 195 n. 56
- Hadley, Dawn M. 22 n. 67
Haki Antonsson 140 n. 103
Haimperl, Edgar 195 n. 60
Hanssen, Jens. S. T. 111 n. 1, 112 n. 2
Harris, Joseph 14 n. 47, 21 n. 63, 177 n. 3,
193 n. 49, 195–6, 199 n. 68
Haubrichs, Wolfgang 66 n. 111, 134 n. 80
Haug, Walter 65 n. 109, 198 n. 67
Heinzelmann, Martin 136 n. 90
Helle, Knut 13 n. 44, 98–9, 210
Hermann Pálsson 85 nn. 164; 165, 210
Hermann, Pernille 4 n. 11, 62–4
Hofer, Hartmut 178 n. 4
Hofmann, Dietrich 49 n. 71
Hudson, Benjamin 150 n. 152
Hughes, Shaun F. D. 114
Hunter Blair, Peter 22 n. 67
Huscroft, Richard 120 n. 39
Hyams, Paul R. 183 n. 28
- Innes, Matthew 134 n. 80
- Jackson, Tatjana N. 138 n. 94
Jaeger, C. Stephen 182–3
Jakob Benediktsson 77 n. 148, 178 n. 6
Jentzmik, Peter 178 n. 4
Jesch, Judith 21 n. 64, 39, 48 n. 68, 61
n. 100, 75 n. 140, 150 n. 152
on Haraldr hárfagri 66 n. 112, 68–9
on skaldic verse and the *Anglo-Saxon
Chronicle* 70 n. 127
Jochens, Jenny 6 n. 15, 7 n. 24, 144 n. 127,
178 n. 5
Johanek, Peter 65 n. 109, 183 n. 28
Johnsen, Arne Odd 111 n. 1
Jón Jóhannesson 14 n. 45, 144 n. 127, 181
n. 16, 187 n. 34, 193 n. 52, 210
Jón Viðar Sigurðsson 14 n. 45, 15 n. 53, 46
n. 62, 144 n. 127, 187 n. 34, 210
Jónas Kristjánsson 142 n. 115, 143 n. 121,
146 n. 138
Jørgensen, Jon Gunnar 16, 133 n. 77
Jørgensen, Jørgen Hojgaard 193 nn. 52; 53
- Kalinke, Marianne 182, 184 n. 29
Kári Gíslason 18 n. 58, 64 n. 109, 179 n. 8
Karlsen, Espen 111 n. 1
Keller, Wolfram R. 197 n. 63
Kersken, Norbert 151 n. 155
Keynes, Simon 131 nn. 69; 71
Knirk, James E. 2 nn. 6; 7
- Kolbrún Haraldsdóttir 16 n. 56, 18 n. 58
Kopár, Lilla 126 n. 54
Körntgen, Ludger 136 n. 90
Krag, Claus 44 n. 54, 50 n. 73, 57, 71
n. 130, 99, 198–9 n. 68
on the unification of Norway and
Haraldr hárfagri 43 n. 53, 67
on verse about Haraldr Sigurðarson
72–5
on *Ynglingasaga* and *Ynglingatal*
25–32, 45 n. 55
Kramarz-Bein, Susanne 183 n. 28, 184
n. 29
Kreutzer, Gert 199 n. 69
Kuhn, Hans 51 n. 76, 86, 195 n. 57
- Laity, K. A. 8 n. 27, 199 n. 68
Lange, Gudrun 70–1 n. 128
Lapidge, Michael 134 n. 80
Lethbridge, Emily 200 n. 72
Leyser, Karl 136 n. 90
Ljungqvist, Fredrik Charpentier 140
n. 103
Lönnroth, Lars 181 n. 18, 199 n. 68
on the function of the past in the
Íslendingasögur 177–8 n. 3, 179 n. 9
on non-native sources of Norse works
111 n. 1, 112, 132 n. 73, 140 n. 102
on *Ynglingatal* 26 n. 4, 27 n. 9, 31
n. 17, 179 n. 8
Louis-Jensen, Jonna 16
Lund, Niels 22 n. 65, 39–40
Lunden, Kåre 46 n. 63
Lutz, Angelika 139 n. 99
- McDougall, Ian 150 n. 153
McKitterick, Rosamond 136 n. 90
McTurk, Rory 31 n. 17
Magnús Fjalldal 32 n. 18, 33 n. 19, 112
n. 8, 114 n. 15, 119, 125 n. 49, 129 n. 61, 145
n. 137
Malmros, Rikke 39–40
Marold, Edith 34, 36, 38–41, 47–8, 76–7
n. 144, 80, 97
Martínez Pizarro, Joaquin 132 n. 75
Marritt, Stephen 126 n. 52, 130 n. 66
Matthews, Alastair 65 n. 109, 142 n. 120
Melnikova, Elena 22 n. 67
Melville, Gert 151 n. 155
Meulengracht Sørensen, Preben 56
n. 89, 58 n. 95, 59–63, 85 n. 164, 139
n. 99, 195 n. 60
Miller, William Ian 36 n. 28
Mitchell, Stephen A. 9 n. 28, 36 n. 28,
195 n. 59

- Moberg, Ove 114, 115 n. 19
 Momigliano, Arnaldo 141 n. 105
 Morales Romero, Eduardo 149 n. 152
 Mortensen, Lars Boje 126 n. 53, 131
 n. 70, 132 nn. 74; 75, 133 n. 77, 143
 n. 122, 146 n. 138
 on *Historia Norwegie* 7 n. 19, 12–13, 111
 n. 1, 112
 on the 'horizons of use' of written texts
 113 n. 10, 141 n. 112, 144 n. 127, 147, 151
 n. 154
 Müller, Jan-Dirk 65 n. 109
 Mundal, Else 4 n. 11, 43 n. 53, 70–1 n. 128,
 86 n. 168, 133 n. 77
 Musset, Lucien 120 n. 38
- Nellmann, Eberhard 142 n. 120
 Nelson, Janet L. 136 n. 90
 Ney, Agneta 140 n. 103
 Nordeide, Sæbjørg Walaker 7 n. 24
- Obolensky, Dmitri 21 n. 64
 Ohly, Friedrich 142 n. 120, 178 n. 4
 O'Donoghue, Heather 15 n. 52, 50 n. 74,
 210
 on *Ágrip* 12 n. 38, 75 n. 140, 78, 93
 on the function of verse in sagas 19
 n. 60, 21 n. 63, 33 n. 20, 61 n. 100, 75
 n. 140, 88 n. 173, 93, 112 n. 2, 128–9
 on the use of verse in the *Anglo-Saxon*
 Chronicle 138–9 n. 99
 on Þormóðr Kolbrúnarskáld at
 Stiklarstaðir 76 n. 143, 89 n. 174, 90
 n. 177, 91 n. 178
 Ólafía Einarsdóttir 15 n. 50, 132 n. 74
 Oram, Richard 149–50 n. 152
 Orchard, Andy 73 n. 135, 131 n. 69, 175
 n. 182, 211
 Orning, Hans Jacob 10 n. 32, 13 n. 44, 44
 n. 54, 52 n. 81, 183 n. 28
 Orri Vésteinsson 5 n. 13, 7 n. 24, 77
 n. 148, 141 n. 110, 144 n. 127, 150 n. 153
 Ortmann, Christa 37 n. 30
- Pabst, Bernhard 21 n. 63, 126 n. 53, 132
 n. 75
 Page, R. I. 1 n. 1, 21 n. 64
 Partner, Nancy 54 n. 87, 63–5, 134
 Paul, Fritz 64 n. 109, 193 n. 52
 Pedersen, Fredrik 149–50 n. 152
 Perkins, Richard 82 n. 160
 Pesch, Alexandra 25, 67
 Peters, Pamela 53 n. 83
 Phelpsstead, Carl 8 n. 27, 56 n. 89, 64
 n. 109, 142 n. 115, 143, 146, 199 n. 68
- Picard, Eve 31 n. 17
 Poole, Russell G. 19 n. 59, 20 n. 61, 21
 n. 63, 25 n. 1, 53 n. 83, 69 n. 126, 77
 n. 145, 118 n. 31
 on reconstructing long poems from
 lausavísur 72 n. 132, 75 n. 140, 88
 n. 173, 93
 on the variability of skaldic verse
 47–9
 on verse regarding Anglo-Saxon
 England 32–4
 Pulsiano, Philip 210
- Quinn, Judy 200 n. 72
- Ragotzky, Hedda 37 n. 30
 Raschellà, Fabrizio 145 n. 129
 Rauer, Christine 130 n. 66
 Reichl, Karl 65 n. 109, 87 n. 169
 Reuter, Timothy 136 n. 90, 183 n. 28
 Reynolds, Susan 183 n. 28
 Riis, Thomas 2 n. 5, 132 n. 75
 Rowe, Elizabeth Ashman 6 n. 17, 14 n. 47,
 130, 180–1, 191, 197 n. 63, 201 n. 73
 Roslund, Mats 140 n. 103
 Røthe, Gunhild 143 n. 122
- Sapp, Christopher D. 30 n. 14, 31 n. 16
 Saurette, Marc 144 n. 126
 Sawyer, Birgit 1 n. 1, 44 n. 54, 150 n. 153,
 181 n. 18
 Sawyer, Peter H. 44 n. 54, 131 n. 71, 149
 n. 152, 150 n. 153, 181 n. 18
 Sayers, William 5 n. 13, 178
 Scardigli, Pierguiseppe 145 n. 129
 Scharer, Anton 131 n. 71
 Schier, Kurt 141 n. 110, 143–5
 Schmale, Franz-Josef 151 n. 155
 Scholz, Birgit 22 n. 67
 Schreiner, Klaus 183 n. 28
 Schröder, Werner 178 n. 4
 Scott, Forrest S. 129 n. 61
 Scragg, Donald G. 139 n. 99
 von See, Klaus 18–19 n. 59, 31 n. 17, 114
 n. 18, 118 n. 31, 180 n. 13, 195 n. 56
 on *Glymdrápa* 49 n. 71
 on *Hkr* 178 nn. 3; 4, 189 n. 40, 192 n. 46
 on *Snorra Edda* 16 n. 54, 197 n. 63
 Shepard, Jonathan 22 n. 67
 Sigfús Blöndal 22 n. 67, 33, 72–4, 116 n. 30
 Simek, Rudolf 140 n. 101, 142, 145 n. 129,
 149, 175 n. 182, 184 n. 31, 197 n. 63, 210, 211
 Simon, Gertrud 146 n. 139
 Skovgaard-Petersen, Karen 148 n. 151
 Spurkland, Terje 1 n. 1

- Steinsland, Gro 31 n. 17
 Sundqvist, Olof 20 nn. 14; 15, 31 n. 17
 Sváva Jakobsdóttir 175 n. 182
 Sverrir Jakobsson 40 n. 39, 140 n. 103, 178
 n. 4, 197 n. 63
 on Haraldr Hálfðanarson 66 n. 112,
 67–8
 on Icelandic social and political
 structures 14 n. 4, 141 n. 110, 144
 n. 127, 187 n. 34
 on identity and nationhood 43 n. 53,
 44 n. 54, 46 n. 63
 Sverrir Tómasson 2 n. 7, 4 n. 11, 6 n. 15, 8
 n. 27, 9 n. 28, 10 n. 32, 19 n. 60, 54
 n. 87, 64 nn. 107; 109, 146–7, 182 n. 26,
 193 n. 52, 210
 on *Nóregs konungatal* 6 n. 17, 194 n. 55
 on the prologues in *Heimskringla*
 55–6 n. 89
 Szabó, Thomas 183 n. 28
- Thomson, Rodney M. 115 n. 19, 124 n. 48,
 142 n. 120
 Torfi H. Tulinius 9 n. 28, 140 n. 101, 141
 n. 110, 184 n. 31, 195 n. 59
 Townend, Matthew 2 n. 2, 22 n. 67, 33
 n. 19, 69–70 n. 126, 83 nn. 162; 163, 131
 n. 69
 Toy, John 150 n. 153
 Tranter, Stephen 13 n. 44
 Turville-Petre, Gabriel 51 n. 76, 140–1, 143
 n. 121, 145 nn. 129; 137, 148
 Tveito, Olav 32 n. 18
- Uecker, Heiko 63 n. 105, 64 n. 109, 210
 Úlfar Bragason 13 n. 44
 Urbańczyk, Przemysław 140 n. 103
- Van Houts, Elisabeth 82 n. 160, 113 n. 11,
 120 n. 38, 125–6, 137
 Vanderputten, Stephen 144 n. 126
 Vansina, Jan 87 n. 169
 Vatsend, Kyrre 111 n. 1
 Vésteinn Ólason 18 n. 59, 19 n. 60, 57
 n. 91, 142, 177 n. 3, 195 nn. 56; 58, 210
- Wanner, Kevin J. 16 n. 54, 20 n. 61, 79
 n. 153, 128 n. 59, 175 n. 182, 184 n. 29, 197
 n. 63
 on *Heimskringla* 18 n. 58, 180–1, 189
 n. 40
 on skaldic verse as cultural capital
 34–8, 57–8, 190–2
 Ward, John O. 144 n. 126
 Waßenhoven, Dominik 149 n. 152, 184
 n. 31
 Weber, Gerd Wolfgang 7 n. 24, 50, 177–8
 n. 3, 179, 184 n. 29, 196
 Wellendorf, Jonas 86 n. 168
 Werner, Karl Ferdinand 151 n. 155
 Wetzstein, Thomas 149 n. 152
 Whaley, Diana 2 n. 7, 3, 4 n. 11, 18 n. 59,
 20 n. 61, 36 n. 28, 42 n. 50, 66–7 n. 112,
 74 n. 136, 80, 97, 98, 210
 on *Heimskringla* and its author 11
 n. 35, 16, 30 n. 14, 75 n. 140, 141 n. 111,
 142 n. 115, 143 n. 124
 on ‘situational’ verses 88, 95 n. 188
 on the use of the past 77 n. 148, 46
 n. 141, 177, 179
 White, Paul A. 72 n. 133, 111 n. 1, 112,
 113–6, 118–21, 125, 126–8, 131, 135, 139
 n. 100, 144 n. 126, 149, 152 n. 156
 White, Stephen D. 183 n. 28
 Wickham, Chris 144 n. 127, 148 n. 148,
 197 n. 65
 Williams, Gareth 7 n. 24, 150 n. 153
 Williams, Henrik 140 n. 103
 Wilson, David M. 49 n. 71, 149 n. 152, 210
 Winterbottom, Michael 115 n. 19, 124
 n. 48, 142 n. 120
 Wolf, Alois 31 n. 17, 64 n. 109
 Wolf, Kirsten 143 n. 121
 Wood, Ian N. 150 n. 153
 Wood, Susan 144 n. 127
 Wormald, Patrick 131 n. 71, 141 n. 105, 144
 n. 127, 148 n. 148
 Würth, Stefanie 4 n. 12, 54 n. 87, 71 n. 131,
 141 n. 110, 142 n. 114, 146 n. 141, 150 n. 153
 on *Flateyjarbók* 6 n. 17, 193 n. 49
 on Latinity in Iceland 145 nn. 129; 135,
 147 nn. 142; 143
 on the reception of antiquity in
 Iceland 185 n. 32, 196 n. 62, 197
 n. 64
- Yeandle, David N. 66 n. 111
- Zernack, Julia 179 n. 9
 Zettel, Horst 21 n. 64, 22 n. 66
- Þorbjörg Helgadóttir 145 n. 136

GENERAL INDEX

Iceland, Norway, kings' sagas and skaldic verse are not included as terms in this index, though individual regions and texts are. Citation of passages from texts is indicated by **bold type**.

- Adam of Bremen 12 n. 39, 22 n. 66, 111
n. 1, 193–4
- Africa 72–3, 115 n. 19
- Ágrip* 6–7, 42 n. 51, 115 n. 19, 170, 189, 193
on Tostig Godwinsson 120, 121 n. 41, 167
scope and provenance of 11–13
verse in 11–12, 71 n. 128, 75 n. 140, 78, 82, 91–4, 96, 129
- Anglo-Norman historiography 22 n. 66, 33, 68, 139 n. 100, 152, 155–9, 163–4, 165, 166, 168–9, 186
concept of entertainment in 54 n. 87
concepts of fiction and history in 63–4
use/influence of in Scandinavia 111–34
see also Dudo of St Quentin; *Gesta Normannorum ducum*; Orderic Vitalis; Wace, William of Apulia, William of Malmesbury; William of Jumièges
- Anglo-Norman political culture 182, 183 n. 28, 184, 186
- Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (ASC) 32, 68, 70 n. 127, 121–2, 138–9
- Apulia 73 n. 135
- Arabic 22 n. 67, 116, 126, 149
- archaeology 1, 22 n. 67, 140 n. 103, 149 n. 152
of the Christianisation of Scandinavia 7 n. 24, 141 n. 110, 144 n. 127, 150 n. 153
of the settlement of Iceland 5 n. 13, 77 n. 148
and *Ynglinga saga* / *Ynglingatal* 25, 31, 67
- archbishops and bishops of Niðaróss 12, 132, 149 n. 152
- alliteration 76 n. 141, 114–15 n. 19
- Ari Þorgilsson 4–6, 13, 30, 66 n. 112, 82, 118–19, 131, 137 n. 93, 196, 200; *see also* *Íslendingabók*
- aristocracy 35–6, 52 n. 81, 57, 80–5, 130 n. 66, 179 n. 8, 183–4, 186–7, 188, 192
- Arthurian romance 64–5 n. 109, 118 n. 31, 137, 182–4, 191, 192
- audience:
of sagas 2 n. 6, 15, 17, 61–2, 64, 144 n. 129, 145, 147–9, 178, 184 n. 31, 187, 198–9
of skaldic verse 34–7, 39, 48, 50–4, 59–62, 71–2, 83–6, 91–4
- authenticating verse(s) 49–50, 56, 59–62, 75–6, 82, 88, 91 n. 179, 94, 95, 190
- authenticity:
medieval concepts of 56–7, 59–65, 100, 134, 138, 198, 201
of the sagas and their verse 25, 32, 34, 46–9, 58–9, 70–2, 75–6, 85 n. 164, 87 n. 169, 88, 95–7
- Bede 111 n. 1, 113, 118 n. 32, 145, 149
- Begleitprosa 71–2, 75–6, 82, 85, 96
- Benedictine order, monasteries, monks 10, 142, 143–4
- Bersöglsvisur* 92–4, 96
- bishops in Iceland 9 n. 30, 137–8 n. 93, 144 n. 129, 147–8 n. 146, 148, 193–5; *see also* biskupa sögur; hagiography
- biskupa sögur 148, 193–4; *see also* hagiography; *Hungrvaka*; *Jóns saga helga*
- Bjarnar saga Hítðælakappa* 47
- Breta sögur* 145–6
- Byzantium 21, 22 n. 67, 33, 72–4, 116, 126, 149, 153–5, 160–5
- Carolingians 22 n. 65, 37, 66, 118 n. 31, 131–2, 134, 136, 137, 149
- Chronicle of Man* 68 n. 118
- Chronicon Roskildense* 2, 3
- chivalry, chivalric ideals: *see* courtly culture
- civil war:
in Iceland 14, 181, 185, 186–7
in Norway 10, 13, 15

- Clontarf, Battle of 69 n. 126
 conversion to Christianity 148
 in Iceland 5–6 n. 15, 19 n. 60, 98
 n. 192, 139–40, 144, 150 n. 153
 in Norway 7, 31 n. 16, 98 n. 192,
 171–3
 courtly culture 37, 182–4, 191, 192
 cultural capital 35–6, 38, 57–8, 187,
 190–2
 cultural memory 62–5, 82–3, 127–8 n. 59,
 130, 192–3
- Dares Phrygius 145, 149
Darðarljóð 69 n. 126
 dating of skaldic verse 19 n. 59, 30–1,
 58–62, 98
 Denmark, Danes 5 n. 15, 8, 112, 118–19
 n. 34, 121, 129–30, 131 n. 69, 149 n. 152,
 167–8, 179 n. 8
 historiography in or by 1–2, 78–9
 n. 152, 159–60
 in skaldic verse 33 n. 19, 39, 41–2
 Dómaldi 27–9, 32
 dróttkvætt 17, 47, 80, 92
 Dudo of St Quentin 116–17, 118–19, 120
 n. 38, 125–6, 128, 132–3, 155–8
- Edda* (*Poetic Edda*) 18–19 n. 59, 175
 n. 182, 195; see also *Snorra Edda*
 editorial practices, modern 42 n. 51, 48
 n. 68, 59, 97–8, 197, 200 n. 72
 education of skalds 20, 77–8, 82–5
 Edward (the Confessor), King of
 England 120–1, 166
Egils saga 47, 52 n. 81, 85–6
 Einhard 134, 149
 Eiríkr Oddson 9–10
Elucidarius 12 n. 39, 145
 England 5 n. 15, 113, 115, 120, 122 n. 45, 124
 n. 49, 126 n. 52, 128, 129–30, 131, 132, 140,
 148, 151
 Anglo-Norman 4, 51, 57, 65 n. 109, 69,
 118, 125, 130, 137 n. 92, 183 n. 28, 184,
 191, 196, 197 n. 63
 Anglo-Saxon 2, 32, 59, 112–13 n. 8, 119,
 131 n. 71, 141 n. 105, 144 n. 127, 150, 166,
 167, 168
 Scandinavians in 2, 21, 22 n. 66, 22
 n. 67, 32–4, 129–30, 131 n. 69
 entertainment 50 n. 74, 53–5, 84, 184
 n. 29
Erfdrápa, see *Hallfróðr Vandræðaskáld*
L'Estoire des Engleis 68 n. 118
 euhemerism 17, 178 n. 3
- eyewitnesses, accounts of 9–10, 18, 53–6,
 60, 62, 63, 74, 76, 79 n. 153, 95, 100, 117,
 136, 138
Eyrbyggja saga 47
 Eysteinn Erlendsson (archbishop of
 Niðaróss) 12, 132, 149 n. 152
 Eyvindr skáldaspillir Finnsson 17, 41
 n. 43, 53 n. 83, 95 n. 188
- **Færeyinga saga* 8, 9 n. 28
Fagrskinna (*Fsk*) 11 n. 35, 18, 49, 77, 115
 n. 19, 138 n. 95
 on Anglo-Saxon noblemen in Norway
 after 1066 127–8 n. 59
 and *Bersöglisvísur* 93–4
 date of 7, 13 n. 44, 15
 on Haraldr Hálfðanarson 42 n. 51
 on Haraldr Sigurðarson in Byzantine
 service 72–4, 116 nn. 23; 25, 117, 152
 n. 156, 153 n. 159, 160 n. 164
 and **Hryggjarstykki* 9 n. 30
 on Óláfr Tryggvason's death 126,
 173–5
 provenance/authorship of 14, 15, 16,
 44, 77, 80
 scope of 12, 13
 on Tostig Godwinsson 168 n. 173
 on Valþjófr/Waltheof 129–30
 verse in 17, 33 n. 20, 38 nn. 35; 36; 37,
 40, 41, 44, 47 nn. 64; 66, 50 n. 74, 53
 n. 83, 69, 72, 73, 74 n. 138, 81, 93, 95
 n. 188, 129, 173–5, 189–90, 192
- family sagas, see *Íslendingasögur*
 fiction 3, 61–5, 87, 100, 134, 142, 151 n. 155,
 180, 198–9, 201
Flateyjarbók 8, 66, 201 n. 73
Fóstbræðra saga in 89 n. 175, 101 n. 201
 verse in 6, 66, 93 n. 185, 95 n. 188, 102,
 105, 108
 þættir in 193 n. 49
 flattery 50–2
 flokkir 33 n. 19, 61 n. 101, 92–4, 95 n. 188,
 129
 fornaldarsögur 9, 11, 30, 195, 199, 200
Fóstbræðra saga (*FbS*) 76 n. 143, 89–91,
 101–4
 dating of 89 n. 175
 France, Francia, Franks 57, 65 n. 109, 66,
 112, 118 n. 32, 135–7, 148, 150–1, 182–3, 191,
 196, 197 n. 63, 198 n. 67
 Scandinavians in 21, 22, 73, 149–50
 n. 152
Fríssbók 165 n. 168
 Fuxerna 51

- Gaimar, *L'Estoire des Engleis* 68 n. 118
gender 99, 137–8 n. 93
genealogy (ættartal; langfæðgatal) 61, 77
n. 148, 118 n. 34, 131, 138 n. 93, 147–8
n. 146
Geoffrey of Monmouth 145, 149
Germanic culture/religion 31 n. 17, 133
n. 78, 136–7, 184 n. 31, 195
Germany 37, 65 n. 109, 66, 112, 118–9
n. 34, 135–7, 140, 142, 147 n. 144, 148, 150,
151, 182, 183, 184 n. 31, 186, 198 n. 67, 200
n. 72
Scandinavians in 8, 21, 73 n. 135, 150–1
n. 152
Gesta Danorum, see Saxo Grammaticus
Gesta Normannorum ducum 68, 115, 120,
124, 158, 163–4, 165
Gesta Roberti Wiscardi, see William of
Apulia
gesta regum (genre) 119, 131, 191, 197
Giffarðr 51–2, 122–3 n. 45
Glúmr Geirason 38 n. 36, 40
Gizurr gullbrá (skald) 76 n. 142
Gizurr Ísleifsson (Icelandic bishop) 194
Glymdrápa 38–9, 47, 49–50, 65–6
Gráfeldardrápa 38 n. 36, 40, 44, 46
Grágas 14 n. 45, 93
Gregory, bishop of Tours 136
Gregory the Great (pope) 113, 143
Gunnlaugr Leifsson 7–8, 112, 126, 148, 194
n. 55
hagiography 143, 146, 149 n. 152; see also
biskupa sögur; *Hungrvaka*; *Jóns saga
helga*
in Denmark 2
in Iceland 7, 8, 54 n. 87, 199–200
Hákon Hákonarson 10, 52 n. 81, 79 n. 153,
137, 139 n. 100, 188, 189, 192
and the composition of *Fsk* and *Hkr*
15, 17, 190
and courtly culture 57, 184 nn. 29; 31,
191
Hákon góði Haraldsson
(Áðalsteinsfóstri) 5 n. 15, 7 n. 24, 41
Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar 10 n. 32, 19,
46 n. 62, 52 n. 81, 79 n. 153, 183 n. 28, 191
n. 45
Háleygjatal 17, 25, 144
Hálfðan svarti 8, 11, 15, 17, 67, 137 n. 93
Halldórr Snorrason 84–5 n. 164, 138,
160–3
Hallfrøðr vandræðaskáld 126–8,
171–6
Haraldr gráfeldr 5 n. 15, 38, 40–1
Haraldr Hálfðanarson (known as
hárfagri) 6, 11, 17, 29 n. 11, 30, 31, 38–9,
40–1, 53
identification of as Haraldr hárfagri
66–70
and the settlement of Iceland 137
n. 93, 196, 199 n. 69
as unifier of Norway 42–5, 196
Haraldr hárfagri, correct identification
of 68–70
Haraldr Sigurðarson (known as
harðráði) 7 n. 23, 14, 77, 78, 84 n. 164,
86 n. 168, 89, 102, 104, 129, 193
in Byzantium / in Byzantine service 22
n. 67, 72–5, 115–16, 153–5, 160–2, 164
in England 68, 95 n. 188, 121–2, 166–8
as Haraldr hárfagri 66–70
as patron of skalds 50, 79 n. 153, 191
n. 45
Haraldskvæði 38, 40, 43 n. 53, 44, 46, 69
Harold Godwinsson 114 n. 15, 120–2, 123
n. 46, 124–5, 129 n. 61, 166–8
survival of after Hastings 126–8, 168–9,
170–1
Hastings, Battle of 114 n. 15, 115, 119–20,
127 n. 59, 129, 166–8
Háttalykill 117 n. 31
heilsesgeschichte, see salvation history
Heimskringla (*Hkr*) 3 n. 8, 7, 11 n. 35, 12
n. 39, 18, 87, 98, 130, 149, 189, 190–1
on Anglo-Saxon noblemen in Norway
after 1066 127–8 n. 59
on Ari Þorgilsson 5–6
authorship of 15–17, 18 n. 58, 55 n. 89,
57–8, 190, 191
and *Bersöglsvisur* 92–4, 96
date of 17
on Halldórr Snorrason 85 n. 164, 138
on Haraldr Hálfðanarson 42 n. 51, 199
n. 69
on Haraldr Sigurðarson in Byzantine
service 73 nn. 134; 135, 152
n. 156, 153 n. 159, 160 n. 164, 165 n. 169
and **Hryggjarstykki* 9–10
image of Icelanders in 36, 193
kingship in 180–1, 185, 195 n. 57
as a means of building cultural
capital 57–8
non-native sources of 114–17, 120,
127–8 n. 59, 131–2, 134, 149
on Norway and Norwegianness 40–6
on Óláfr helgi Haraldsson 8, 76, 86
n. 168, 135–7, 142, 199 n. 68

- on Óláfr Tryggvason 126, 175–6
 prologues of 50–7, 60, 62–3, 146 n. 139
 provenance of 14
 and *Sverris saga* 143
 on Tostig Godwinsson 120–1, 168 n. 173
 typology in 177–8 n. 3, 179
 on Úlfr stallari Óspaksson 138
 use of verse in 17, 25–32, 33 n. 20, 38
 n. 37, 40–6, 47 nn. 64; 66, 48, 49–50,
 50–7, 57–8, 65–6, 69 n. 124, 74, 75
 n. 140, 76, 77, 80, 81, 82, 88–91, 92–4,
 95 n. 188, 107–10, 129, 192
 on Valþjófr 129
 on William of Normandy and Harold
 Godwinsson 123–5
 on Þormóðr Kolbrúnarskáld 88–91,
 107–10
 see also Snorri Sturluson; *Ynglinga saga*;
 Ynglingatal
 Helmold of Bosau 22 n. 66
Hemings Þáttr 95 n. 188, 129 n. 63
Hirðskrá 184 n. 29
Historia Gruffud vab Kenan 68 n. 118
Historia de Antiquitate regum
 Norwagensium (HARN), see Theodoricus
 Monachus
Historia Norwegie (HN) 7, 25–9, 42 n. 51,
 49, 71 n. 128, 78, 127, 169–70, 189
 non-native sources of 111–12, 134
 scope and provenance of 12–13, 17
 historic present tense, use of in skaldic
 verse 94–5
 history and legend, relationship between
 8–9, 30, 50–1, 62–3, 67, 86–7
 Hólar 194 n. 55
 Honorius of Autun 12 n. 39, 113
 hrynhent 117 n. 31
Hungrvaka 193–4; see also biskupa sögur
 **Hryggjarstykki* 9, 14, 78 n. 150, 143
Hyde Chronicle 68 n. 118
Høfuðlausn (of Egill Skalla-Grimsson)
 47–8
 Hørdaland 43 n. 53, 92–4, 128 n. 59
 identity, concepts of (national, ethnic,
 regional) 96, 137 n. 92
 in Iceland 43–4 n. 53, 177–9, 199 n. 69
 in Norway 40–6
 individuality 181–2, 185–6
 Ingi krókhrygg 11, 181
 Ingimundr prestr 61, 82
 Ireland 69 n. 126, 118, 150
 Irish settlers in Iceland 178
 Isidore, bishop of Seville 145, 149
 Isle of Man 49–50
Íslendingabók (Ísl) 4–5, 6 n. 15, 77, 78,
 118 n. 34, 146, 177–8, 200
 on Haraldr Hálfðanarson 42 n. 51, 68,
 137 n. 93, 199 n. 69
 on the settlement of Iceland 137 n. 93
 see also Ari Þorgilsson
Íslendinga saga 52 n. 81
 Íslendingasögur (sagas of Icelanders,
 family sagas) 11 n. 34, 14 n. 45, 22
 n. 67, 46 n. 62, 77, 81, 86 n. 168, 146
 n. 141, 187, 192, 194, 195, 201 n. 73
 and concepts of authenticity and
 fiction 60, 62–3, 64 n. 109
 non-native influence on 140 n. 102,
 143 n. 121
 use of the past in 177–9, 188, 198–200
 verse in 19, 69–70 n. 126
 see also *Bjarnar saga Hittælakappa*;
 Egils saga, *Fóstbrædra saga*; *Njals*
 saga; skald sagas
 Jerusalem 51, 56, 74, 184 n. 31
 John of Worcester 68 n. 118, 121–2
Jómsvíkinga saga 8, 9 n. 28
 Jón Loptsson 194 n. 55
 Jón Ögmundarson 144 n. 129, 194 n. 55
Jóns saga helga 194 n. 55
 Jordanes 133 n. 78
 Jörunn skáldmær 69 n. 124
Kaiserchronik 65 n. 109, 142–3
 Karl Jónsson (abbot of Þingeyrar, author
 of *Sverris saga*) 10, 79 n. 153
 Ketill krókr 127–8 n. 59
 Kievan Rus, see Rus
 kingship, concepts of 10, 13 n. 44, 14,
 38–40, 44, 46, 96, 130, 134–7, 141, 180–7,
 192; see also *Heimskringla*, kingship
 in; *Morkinskinna*, kingship in; sacral
 kingship
Knýtlinga saga 11 n. 34, 32–3 n. 19, 185
Konunga ævi (of Ari Þorgilsson) 5–6
Konungs skuggsjá 183 n. 28, 184 n. 29
Landnámabók 77, 177, 178–9, 194, 195
 Latin education 141, 146–7, 150 n. 153,
 196–7
 Latin sources (potential or known):
 of *Heimskringla*, see *Heimskringla*,
 non-native sources of
 of *Morkinskinna*, see *Morkinskinna*,
 non-native sources of
 of other Norse works 118, 131–2, 143–4

- lausavísa, lausavísur 88–95
 law, legal texts 14 n. 45, 92–3, 131 n. 71,
 179 n. 8, 184 n. 29, 188, 194, 198, 201
 n. 73
Leiðarvísir (of abbot Nikulás Bergsson)
 184 n. 31
Libellus Islendorum, see *Íslendingabók*
Líðsmannaflokkur 33 n. 19
 Lombardy, Lombards 73, 132
 Lucan 145, 149
Ludwigslied 66
 Lund 112 n. 4, 132, 148
- Magnús berfœttr 51, 122–3 n. 45
 Magnús Erlingsson 15, 189
 Magnús (góði) Ólafsson 14, 75 n. 140, 86
 n. 168, 91–4, 95 n. 188, 193
 manuscripts 16, 18, 32, 79 n. 153, 127, 128,
 147, 188, 195 n. 56, 197–8, 200–1
 of the compendia 18, 98, 160 n. 164,
 165 n. 168
 earliest in Iceland 144–5
 provenance of 2 n. 6, 11 n. 34, 12
 n. 41, 177
 of verse 30–1, 40 n. 42, 45 n. 55, 66,
 91, 98
 see also *Flateyjarbók*; *Frissbók*; variant
 texts
- Marianus Scotus 68
 Mathilda, wife of Duke William of
 Normandy 123–4
 memory, see cultural memory
Merlínussþá 145
 mockery 50–5
 monasteries, cultivation of literature
 in 10, 14, 113, 141–5, 147, 194
Morkinskinna (*Msk*) 7, 11 n. 35, 14–15, 18,
 56, 71 n. 129, 81, 93 n. 185, 179 n. 8, 189,
 190, 200
 on Anglo-Saxon noblemen in Norway
 after 1066 127–8 n. 59
 date of 13 n. 44, 14, 182, 189
 and Eiríkr Oddson 9 n. 30
 on Halldór Snorrason 84 n. 164, 138
 n. 95, 161–2
 on Haraldr Sigurðarsson in Byzantine
 service 72–5, 115–17, 152 n. 156,
 153–5, 160–3, 164
 image of Icelanders in 36, 51–2, 84
 n. 164, 192–3
 kingship in 180–5, 191–2
 non-native sources of 114, 115–17, 120,
 127–8 n. 59, 134, 149
 on the prelude to Hastings 120–5
- provenance of 14, 141–2, 191, 77
 Scandinavian sources of 14–15, 83
 n. 161, 149
 scope of 12, 14
 on Sigurðr Jónsalafari 164–5
 on Tostig Godwinsson 121–3, 167–8
 on Úlfr stallari Óspaksson 160–3
 verse in 47, 50 n. 74, 51, 72–5, 78, 81,
 82, 88, 93 n. 185, 95 n. 188
 þættir in 17, 51–2, 84 n. 164, 192–3
 Munkaþverá 14, 142, 181
 myth, mythology 18 n. 59, 36 n. 28, 140
 n. 103, 144, 200, 211
 of origins 17, 130 n. 66, 178, 190–1, 195,
 196–7, 199 n. 69
 and *Snorra Edda* 16, 17, 175 n. 182,
 190–1, 196–7
 of the Ynglingar dynasty 12, 25, 31–2
- Narbonne 118 n. 32, 183 n. 28
Nestorian Chronicle of 1166, see *Povest'*
vremennyykh let
 Niall Glundubh 69 n. 126
Nibelungenlied 182
 Niðarnes 5 n. 15, 6 n. 16
 Niðaróss 6 n. 16, 12–13, 91–2, 94, 132
 Nikulás Bergsson 184 n. 31
Njáls saga 69–70 n. 126
Nóregs konungatal 6, 8, 29 n. 11, 194 n. 55
 Normandy 69, 119–24, 126 n. 52, 128, 130,
 131, 140, 144 n. 126, 151, 166
- Oddi 147–8 n. 146, 194 n. 55
 Oddr Kíkinaskáld 95 n. 188
 Oddr Kólsson 5 n. 15
 Oddr Snorrason 6, 7, 8, 78 n. 150, 112, 126,
 127, 144 n. 129, 170–3, 179 n. 9
 Ohthere (Óttar) 43
 Óláfr helgi Haraldsson 5 n. 15, 8, 11 n. 34,
 12, 15, 16, 32 n. 18, 45, 46 n. 61, 54, 61
 n. 101, 78, 86 n. 168, 114–15, 122 n. 43,
 135–6, 140 n. 103, 142, 143, 179 n. 9, 181,
 189, 200
 at the battle of Stiklarstaðir 76, 88–91,
 101–10
 and the conversion of Iceland and
 Norway 7
 Óláfr Tryggvason 6, 8, 11 n. 34, 15, 78, 86
 n. 168, 111 n. 1, 113 n. 12, 131–2, 143, 144
 n. 129, 179 n. 9, 189, 194 n. 55
 and the conversion of Iceland and
 Norway 5 n. 15, 7
 survival of after the battle of Svöldr 12,
 126–8, 169–76

- Óláfs saga helga* (in *Hkr*) 5 n. 15, 42, 45, 86 n. 168; see also *Separate saga of Óláfr helgi Haraldsson*
- Óláfs saga hins helga* (the *Legendary Saga* on Óláfr helgi Haraldsson: *Ólhelg*) 8, 32 n. 18, 33 nn. 19; 20, 75 n. 140, 114–15 n. 19, 142, 199 n. 68
on Þormóðr kolbrúnarskald 76 n. 143, 88–91, 104–6
- Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar*, see Oddr Snorrason
- Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar hin mesta* (13th-century compilation) 8 n. 25
- Old English Orosius* 43
- oral sources 2 n. 6, 22 n. 67, 129, 150
of prose sagas 9 n. 28, 19 n. 60, 62, 72, 76, 81–3, 85–7, 90, 116–17, 127–8, 132 n. 73, 200
of *Heimskringla* 54, 56 n. 89, 131
of *Morkinskinna* 14–15, 83 n. 161, 149
of Latin histories 20–1, 71 n. 128, 78–9 n. 152, 112–13, 116–17
of written skaldic verse 13, 15, 31, 47–8, 50, 59, 65, 70 n. 127, 71 n. 131, 90, 127–8
- oral circulation of written material 62, 112–13, 116–17, 127, 129, 132–3, 146–9, 150
- Orderic Vitalis 68 n. 118, 114 n. 15, 115, 120, 121, 122–3 n. 45, 124, 126, 128, 130 n. 66, 144 n. 126, 166
- Orkneyinga saga* 8, 9 n. 28, 60, 62, 200 n. 72
- Ottonians 135–7
- Parcevals saga* 184 n. 29; see also romance
- Passio et miracula beati Olavi* 8
- patrons, patronage 12–13, 15–17, 127 n. 59, 190–2
and skalds 19–21, 34, 35–7, 39, 50–2, 56, 71–2, 74, 76–7, 79 n. 153, 117–18 n. 31, 126 n. 52
- performance:
of sagas 60–2, 84–7
of skaldic verse 18–19, 34–5, 47–8, 51, 53–4, 59–60, 71–2, 80–1, 83–6, 147 n. 144
- Plácítusdrápa* 145
- politics, see social/political relations
- Povest' vremennykh let* (Nestorian or *Primary Chronicle of m6*) 22
- Primary Chronicle of m6*, see *Povest' vremennykh let*
- Reykjahólar, wedding at 60–2
- riddarasögur, see courtly culture; *Parcevals saga*; romance
- Rimbert 22 n. 66
- ritual sacrifice 27–9
- Roman de Brut*, see Wace
- romance (Arthurian romance; chivalric romance; riddarasögur) 64–5 n. 109, 118 n. 31, 137, 182–4, 191, 192; see also courtly culture
- Rome 73 n. 135, 76, 112 n. 2, 184 n. 31, 196, 197 nn. 63; 64
- Rómverja saga* 145, 185 n. 32
- Rus (Kievan Rus; Russia) 22, 33, 73 n. 135, 116, 140 n. 103, 149
- Russia, see Rus
- Rognvaldr, earl of Orkney 60
- sacral kingship 31 n. 17
- saga style 119 n. 34, 125
- Sagas of Icelanders, see *Íslendinga sögur*
- St Victor, monastery of 112
- Sallust 113, 145, 149
- salvation history 118 n. 32, 142; see also typology
- samtíðarsögur, see *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar*; *Íslendinga saga*; *Sturlunga saga*; *Sverris saga*
- Saxo Grammaticus 2, 20–1 n. 62, 21 n. 63, 78–9 n. 152, 132–3, 153, 159–60
- Saxony 73 n. 135, 135–7, 184 n. 31
- Scotland 49 n. 70, 121 n. 41, 122
- settlement of Iceland 4–5, 19 n. 60, 43 n. 53, 53, 77 n. 148, 137 n. 93, 178–9, 199 n. 69
- Separate saga of Óláfr helgi Haraldsson* 16–17, 74, 75 n. 140
prologue of 5 n. 15, 51 n. 78, 53–8, 61–2, 74, 138 n. 95
see also *Heimskringla*, prologue of; Snorri Sturluson
- Sextsteffa* 56, 73 n. 135, 74, 95 n. 188
- Sicily 72–3, 197 n. 63
- Sigtryggr Sigtryggsson 69 n. 126
- Sigtryggr silkiskegg 69 n. 126
- Sigurðr Jórsalafari Magnússon 11, 126 n. 52, 164–5, 188
- Sigvatr Þórðarson 32 n. 18, 33, 48 n. 68, 75 n. 140, 76, 91–4, 96
- situational verse, see *lausavísa*
- skald sagas 58–63, 82; see also *Bjarnar saga Hítðælakappa*; *Egils saga*, *Fostbræðra saga*
- Skáldatal* 79 n. 153, 191 n. 45

- Skálholt 147 n. 146, 193 n. 52
 Skúli Þarðarson 127–8 n. 59, 190, 192
 Skúli (son of Tosti Guðinason / Tostig Godwinsson) 127–8 n. 59
Sköldunga saga 8–9, 11 n. 34
Snorra Edda 15–16, 17, 34–6, 57–8, 79
 n. 153, 141, 144, 175 n. 182, 178 n. 3, 190–1,
 195 n. 56, 196; see also *Edda*; Snorri Sturluson
 Snorri Sturluson 10 n. 32, 19, 53 n. 83, 95
 n. 188, 98, 133 n. 77, 179 n. 8, 180, 185,
 187, 190–1, 195 n. 56, 197 n. 63
 as author of *Heimskringla* 15–17, 50, 55
 n. 89, 57–8
 education of and Latin influence on
 141, 147–8 n. 146, 178 nn. 3; 4
 and his Norwegian patrons 34–6,
 127–8 n. 59, 181, 189, 192
 see also *Heimskringla*; *Separate saga of Óláfr helgi Haraldsson*; *Snorra Edda*
 social/political relations 14 n. 45, 15
 n. 53, 20 n. 61, 34–6, 39, 43–4 n. 53, 46
 n. 62, 144 n. 127, 178, 179–80, 181, 183–4,
 192 n. 46, 197 n. 46; see also civil war;
 courtly culture; cultural capital; identity,
 concepts of; kingship, concepts of;
 patronage
 source criticism 112–13, 179, 188, 201 n. 73
 Stamford Bridge, Battle of 95 n. 188, 114,
 115, 120–2
 Stiklarstaðir, Battle of 56, 76, 88–91, 94,
 101–9
 Sturla Þorðarson 10 n. 32, 19, 35 n. 23, 52
 n. 81, 79 n. 153; see also *Hákonar saga Hákonarsonar*; *Íslendinga saga*
Sturlunga saga 13 n. 44, 14 n. 45, 52
 n. 81, 77, 192, 194; see also *Íslendinga saga*; *Þorgils saga ok hafliða*
 Styrmir Kárason 8
 Suetonius 114–5 n. 19, 134
 Sven Aggesen 2, 3
 Sverrir Sigurðarson 10, 11, 12–13, 15, 17, 61,
 78–9, 179, 181, 188–9, 191
Sverris saga 10, 46 n. 62, 79 n. 153, 81–2,
 143, 179, 185, 189, 190, 191 n. 45
 Svöldr, battle at 12, 132 n. 73
 Sweden, Swedes 1–2, 25–9, 31 n. 17, 38,
 67, 143–4, 179 n. 8
 Sæmundr inn fróði 6, 13, 200
- Thietmar of Merseburg 22 n. 66, 135–7
 Tosti Guðinason; Tostig Godwinsson 114
 n. 15, 120–22, 127–8 n. 29, 166–8
 transmission of skaldic verse 19–21, 30–1,
 40, 46–9, 53–4, 59, 65, 70–2, 76–84, 90,
 117, 127
 travel (of Scandinavians outside
 Scandinavia) 43, 72–4, 117, 149–50; see
 also Byzantium; England, Scandinavians
 in; *Leiðarvísir*; Varangians
Trójumanna saga 145–6, 196–7; see also
 Troy, Trojans
 Trondheim, see Niðaróss
 troubadours, trouvères 118 n. 31
 Troy, Trojans 118–19, 145–6, 178 n. 3,
 190–1, 194, 196–7
 typology 177–8, 179
- Úlfr stallari Óspaksson 138, 160–3
 Uppsala 27–8
- Valþjófr, Waltheof (English earl) 126
 n. 52, 129–30
Valþjófsflokkr 129
 Varangians 22 n. 67, 72–5, 130, 138, 140
 n. 103
 variant texts:
 of saga prose 160 n. 164, 165 n. 168
 of skaldic poems 21 n. 63, 40 n. 42, 45
 n. 55, 46, 47–50, 55, 65, 68–9, 70, 93
 n. 185
Veraldar saga 145
 Vestfold 67
Vestrfararvísir 32 n. 18
Víkingarvísir 33, 75 n. 140
 Vísburr 26–7, 32
 Vilhjálmr, see William
Vita Anskari 22 n. 66
Vita Haroldi (Life of Harold
 Godwinsson) 127–8, 168–9
Vita Waldevi 129
- Wace (*Roman de Brut*) 116, 152
 Waltheof, see Valþjófr
 Walther von der Vogelweide 37
 Widukind of Corvey 135–7
 William, Duke of Normandy, King of
 England 114–5, 120, 123–5, 127
 n. 59, 129, 166
 William of Apulia 116, 118 n. 31, 158–9
 William of Jumièges 68, 115–16, 118–19,
 120 n. 38, 133 n. 78, 144 n. 126, 158
 William of Malmesbury 68, 112, 113,
 114–15, 118 n. 32, 120, 123–4 n. 37, 128–9,
 142, 144 n. 126

- William of Poitiers 115, 120 n. 39
 Wir-Gefühl, *see* identity, concepts of
- York 69–70 n. 126, 83 nn. 162; 163
 Ynglingar dynasty 12, 17, 25–9, 30, 38, 67, 179
Ynglinga saga 12 n. 39, 17, 25–9, 31–2, 41, 54, 67, 71, 75 n. 140, 125 n. 49
Ynglingatal 17, 25–32, 38, 40, 50, 54, 56, 67, 71, 75 n. 140, 125 n. 49, 144, 198–9 n. 68
- Pangbrandr (priest) 5 n. 15
 þáttir, þættir 14, 37–8, 81, 87, 138 n. 95, 182, 184 n. 30, 192–3; *see also* *Flateyjarbók*; *Morkinskinna*
 Þingeyrar 10, 142
- Þjóðólfr Arnórsson 41 n. 43, 73 n. 135, 74, 95 n. 188; *see also* *Sexstefja*
 Þjóðólfr ór Hvíni 26–8; *see also* *Ynglingatal*
 Þorbjörn hornklofi 38–9, 47, 49–50, 69
 Þorgeir afráðskollr 5 n. 15
Þorgils saga ok Haflíða 60–2
 Þorlákr Þórhallson, bishop of Skálholt 138 n. 93, 144 n. 129, 147–8 n. 146
 Þormóðr Bersason Kólbrúnarskáld 76 n. 142, 88–91, 94, 101–10
 Þorvarðr Þorgeirsson 181
 Þrándheimr 128 n. 59; *see also* Niðaróss
 Þrændalög, Þrændir 93–4; *see also* Niðaróss; Þrándheimr